



Billesdon Neighbourhood Development Plan Review: Submission Draft 2022-2031



BILLESDON PARISH COUNCIL

Billesdon Neighbourhood Development Plan Review: Submission Draft 2022-2031



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Non-Technical Summary

Following a positive referendum result (on 18 September 2014), the first Billesdon Neighbourhood Development Plan was 'made' and since then it has been used by Harborough District Council to decide planning applications, along with the adopted Harborough Local Plan and other material considerations.

The first Neighbourhood Plan has performed well. It has directed the location of development according to the community's wishes, preventing development from taking place in unacceptable places. However, the Neighbourhood Plan is over eight years old and there is continuing pressure for more housing on the green fields around our village.

Billesdon Parish Council has therefore decided to review the Neighbourhood Plan but not change its nature. The review of the Billesdon Neighbourhood Plan incorporates changes to meet the latest national and local planning policy requirements. Revisions include:

- Added support for biodiversity;
- More protections for built heritage and archaeology, including ridge and furrow fields;
- The former lorry park on Gaulby Road is now allocated for housing development, having previously been identified as a housing reserve site;
- Measures to bring forward the redevelopment of the former Highway Depot on Gaulby Road;
- Provision for a new playing field is retained but there is more flexibility on its location.

As before, the Neighbourhood Plan Review will go through a formal process of preparation although, if the Planning Authority and an Independent Examiner agree, a referendum will not be required.



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1. Introduction

Neighbourhood Plans

1.1 The 2011 Localism Act has given communities the right to draw up a Neighbourhood Plan. This right is aimed at giving local communities genuine opportunities to influence the future of the places where they live.

1.2 The first Billesdon Neighbourhood Development Plan was 'made' by Harborough District Council on 9 October 2014 following a successful local referendum. It was one of the first neighbourhood plans to be 'made' in Leicestershire. The Plan allowed people, who live, work and have a business in the Parish to have a say where they think new houses, businesses and shops should be located and what they should look like. The first

Billesdon Neighbourhood Development Plan is a statutory document and has the same legal status as the Harborough Local Plan (and other documents that form part of the statutory development plan). It is being used by Harborough District Council to determine planning applications in the Parish. To make sure the Neighbourhood Plan remains current, Billesdon Parish Council has decided to review and update it.

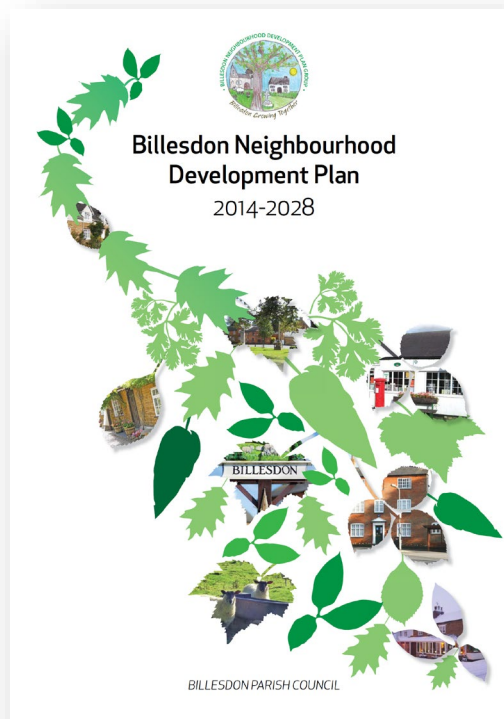


Figure 1: first Billesdon Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Billesdon Neighbourhood Area

1.3 The [Billesdon Neighbourhood Area](#) comprises the Parish of Billesdon which is located within the Harborough District Council area of Leicestershire. The Parish is comprised of a rural area of 868 hectares with a population of 901 and 445 homes (2011 Census) located just off the A47, 9 miles east of Leicester city centre.

1.4 The village of Billesdon lies south of the A47 and the rest of the Parish contains farms and scattered dwellings. The Neighbourhood Area was designated by Harborough District Council on 29 October 2012.

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Basic Conditions

1.5 A neighbourhood plan must meet each of a set of basic conditions before it can be put to a referendum and be made. The basic conditions state that plans must:

- 🌱 Have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 🌱 Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 🌱 Be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area.
- 🌱 Not breach, and otherwise be compatible with, EU obligations (now part of UK Law).
- 🌱 Comply with other prescribed matters.

National Policies and Guidance

1.6 The [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) was first published on 27 March 2012 and updated on 24 July 2018, 19 February 2019, 20 July 2021 and 5 September 2023. This sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

1.7 The planning practice guidance that supports the NPPF is published [online](#).

The Development Plan

1.8 The relevant development plan for the area is the [Harborough Local Plan](#) which was adopted by Harborough District Council in April 2019.

1.9 The Local Plan identifies Billesdon village as a Rural Centre providing housing, business, retail, leisure, and community facilities to serve its needs and those of surrounding areas. Elsewhere within the Billesdon Neighbourhood Area, new development will be more limited.

The Neighbourhood Plan Review

1.10 Billesdon Parish Council is the 'Qualifying Body' responsible for preparing the Neighbourhood Plan. The preparation of the first Billesdon Neighbourhood Development Plan was supported by a Neighbourhood Development Plan Group (BNDPG), comprising some 15 volunteers drawn from the residents of the Parish.

1.11 The first Neighbourhood Plan was the subject of considerable community input and was 'made' by Harborough District Council on 9 October 2014. This



Figure 2: Harborough Local Plan

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followed a successful local [referendum](#) on 18 September 2014 when, on a turnout of 55%, 84% supported the first Neighbourhood Plan. However, the first Neighbourhood Plan is over five years old and we have decided to review and update it to take account of:

- 🌿 The latest National Planning Policy Framework which was updated on 20 July 2021;
- 🌿 The Harborough Local Plan which was adopted on 30 April 2019; and
- 🌿 Key decisions on the more than 100 planning applications that have been decided since the Neighbourhood Plan was 'made'.

- 1.12 The first Neighbourhood Plan covered the period 2014 to 2028 and this has been extended to 2031 to align with the Harborough Local Plan.
- 1.13 There is no timeframe within which neighbourhood plans are required to be reviewed or updated. However, areas with neighbourhood plans that are less than two years old can benefit from added protection provided certain criteria are met.
- 1.14 We have concluded that some material changes are required but the broad nature of the Billesdon Neighbourhood Development Plan should not change. These modifications are incorporated into this Pre-Submission Draft version of the Billesdon Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 1.15 Consultation on the Pre-Submission Draft version of the revised Billesdon Neighbourhood Development Plan ran from 6 February to 20 March 2023. A copy of this Pre-Submission Draft version of the revised Neighbourhood Development Plan was made available to download, along with supporting documentation, on the Parish Council website. A community newsletter containing information about the Neighbourhood Plan Review was delivered to all premises within the Parish.
- 1.16 All comments received have been considered by Billesdon Parish Council and used to amend the Pre-Submission Draft version of the revised Neighbourhood Plan. A Consultation Statement, including a summary of all comments received and how these were considered, will be made available on the Parish Council website.

Next Steps

- 1.17 The draft revised Billesdon Neighbourhood Development Plan will now be submitted to Harborough District Council for publication and a further six-week public consultation will take place before it is sent to an Independent Examiner.
- 1.18 Material modifications which do not change the nature of the first Plan require examination but not a referendum. Material modifications which do change the nature of the first Plan require examination and a referendum.
- 1.19 When the revised Billesdon Neighbourhood Development Plan is 'made', it will replace the current version of the Neighbourhood Plan and form part of the

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Statutory Development Plan for Billesdon Parish. Harborough District Council will continue to be responsible for determining most planning applications (mineral and waste planning applications are determined by the County Council). In Billesdon Parish, the policies in the revised Neighbourhood Development Plan will continue to form the basis of those decisions along with the adopted Harborough Local Plan and any other material considerations.



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2. Profile

Overview

- 2.1 Billesdon Parish is bisected by the A47 which runs west-east linking Leicester to the A1. The staggered crossroads with the B6047 north-south Market Harborough to Melton Mowbray is the east of the Parish. The Billesdon and Coplow Brooks flow through the parish east west to the River Sence.
- 2.2 There population of Billesdon Parish on 2021 was 910¹. In total there were 420 households.
- 2.3 The Parish has an age profile which shows a higher proportion of people over 45- 58.6%, compared with average for England- 44.2%. There is a higher proportion of white people (93.5%) compared to England (81%), but similar to the rest of Harborough District (91%). There is a higher proportion of single family households (65.4%) compared with England (63%).
- 2.4 The Parish is relatively prosperous, with higher proportions of people employed as managers. Directors and senior officials (18.1%) or in professional occupations (25.6%).
- 2.5 The Parish has a higher proportion of larger homes (32% with four bedrooms or more) compared with the whole of the country (21.1%). Average house prices are higher than the rest of Harborough District and much higher than the whole of the country.

Billesdon

- 2.6 Billesdon is a large compact village formerly on the main Leicester - Uppingham Road, but was by-passed by the A47 in October 1986. Several roads, routes and lanes converge at the Market Place, including the loop of Church Street and Brook Lane. The Billesdon Brook flows through the village.
- 2.7 Billesdon village lies 2km west of Skeffington west and 4km east of Houghton on the Hill. There are about 415 dwellings in the village.
- 2.8 There is a good range of services including two public houses, a village shop and a doctors' surgery. On Church Street there is a post office and on Rolleston Road a fire station. The Coplow Centre provides a multi-functional community hall.

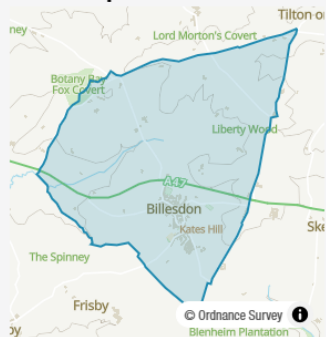
¹ Rounded to the nearest 10 people

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Billesdon

Area map



Population

910

people

97,600 people in Harborough

Rounded to the nearest 10 people (nearest 100 for Harborough)

Number of households

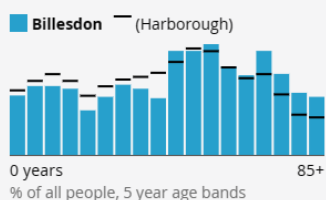
420

households

40,400 households in Harborough

Rounded to the nearest 10 households (nearest 100 for Harborough)

Age profile



% of all people, 5 year age bands

Household composition

Billesdon | (Harborough)

One person household **31.5%** (26.0%)

Single family household **65.4%** (69.6%)

Other household types **3.1%** (4.4%)

% of all households

Ethnic group

Billesdon | (Harborough)

Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh **2.9%** (5.4%)

Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African **0.0%** (0.7%)

Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups **3.6%** (2.1%)

White **93.5%** (91.0%)

Other ethnic group **0.0%** (0.8%)

% of all people

Disability

Billesdon | (Harborough)

Disabled under the Equality Act **14.8%** (15.1%)

Not disabled under the Equality Act **85.2%** (84.9%)

% of all people

Accommodation type

Billesdon | (Harborough)

Whole house or bungalow **93.6%** (92.4%)

Flat, maisonette or apartment **6.4%** (7.0%)

A caravan or other mobile or temporary structure **0.0%** (0.6%)

% of all households

Number of cars or vans

Billesdon | (Harborough)

No cars or vans in household **5.5%** (10.0%)

1 car or van in household **41.1%** (36.4%)

2 cars or vans in household **35.6%** (38.1%)

3 or more cars or vans in household **17.7%** (15.5%)

% of all households

Number of bedrooms

Billesdon | (Harborough)

1 bedroom **9.1%** (5.7%)

2 bedrooms **19.6%** (21.6%)

3 bedrooms **39.4%** (35.9%)

4 or more bedrooms **32.0%** (36.8%)

% of all households

Tenure of household

Billesdon | (Harborough)

Owens outright **45.5%** (40.8%)

Owens with a mortgage or loan or shared ownership **27.3%** (37.0%)

Social rented **12.1%** (8.7%)

Private rented or lives rent free **15.2%** (13.5%)

% of all households

Economic activity status

Billesdon | (Harborough)

Economically active: In employment **56.1%** (60.6%)

Economically active: Unemployed **1.4%** (1.9%)

Economically inactive **42.5%** (37.4%)

% of people aged 16 years and over

Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Figure 3: 2021 Census profile

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3. Sustainable Development and Vision

Key Issues

3.1 During the preparation of the first Billesdon Neighbourhood Development Plan the following key issues emerged, set within the overall concern that local people wanted to see the character of Billesdon maintained and for it to remain a sustainable community:

- 🌿 **The number of new houses:** the Community supports an increase in the housing stock, with Billesdon village as the principal location for development within the Parish. The successful integration of new houses, and their families, into the existing village community and infrastructure is a significant Key Issue for the Community, especially when seeking to maintain the character and sense of community of a rural village.
- 🌿 **The number of sites for new houses:** a range of sites for the construction of new houses is available, but the number of sites chosen will alter the shape and structure of the Village.
- 🌿 **The sites for development:** once the number of sites is agreed, a choice must be made between the available sites.
- 🌿 **The types and sizes of new housing:** the community is concerned with: the provision of 2-3 bedroom houses within a mix of new housing (e.g. 1, 2, 3, 4+ bedrooms); the need for affordable homes within a mix of market, rented and shared ownership dwellings; the provision of a range of dwelling types, to allow elderly residents of the Parish to ‘downsize’ without leaving the local area (e.g. bungalow, semi-detached, detached, flats); the density of housing; and the need to integrate services and amenities into the housing development.
- 🌿 **Housing design:** the community is sensitive to the potential design features of new housing, such that new housing integrates with the existing character of the village and is sensitive to sustainable and “green” design features.
- 🌿 **Broadband:** the community acknowledges that the present broadband facility in the Parish is not fit for purpose. A substantial upgrade is required to enable home-workers to operate more efficiently and enable local businesses to grow, thereby providing a sustainable increase in local employment opportunities.
- 🌿 **Redevelopment of existing buildings for retail, office or light industrial use:** a shortage of floor space exists for new and expanding businesses in the Parish. Opportunities exist for the conversion of suitable buildings, as a way of creating sustainable employment opportunities.
- 🌿 **New-build office and light industrial floor space:** a shortage of floor space exists for new and expanding businesses in the Parish.
- 🌿 **Recreational Facilities:** the Parish has a significant number of young people, many of whom are, or will become, teenagers during the life-time of the Neighbourhood Development Plan. The Community recognises that

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there are insufficient leisure time facilities in the Parish for these young people.

- 🍃 **The Coplow Centre:** faced by an increased demand from families in new housing, the community is concerned that there is little capacity to increase the use of recreational facilities at The Coplow Centre.
- 🍃 **Retail opportunities:** the community is anxious to retain the existing independent retail businesses within the Parish. But an increased population would create opportunities for existing businesses to develop, as well as for the creation of new businesses to extend the range of retail opportunities.
- 🍃 **The Primary School:** faced by an increased demand from families in new housing, the Primary School is nearly at full capacity, as is the road outside the Primary School at the start and end of the school day.
- 🍃 **Traffic Management:** the main traffic management problems of the Parish lie in the village of Billesdon. The Village is rural in character and has narrow roads, particularly at its centre. The existing volume of through traffic already poses threats to the safety of both road users and pedestrians, in addition to creating noise and air pollution. With a prospective increase in the village population, further pressure will be put on the road system by the increased number and movement of cars and people. The main problem area lies in and around Market Place, although there are also specific bends, stretches of road and road junctions that give cause for further concern, particularly outside the Village Primary School.
- 🍃 **Parking:** parking is a significant problem in Market Place, in the village centre, where important services are located – the village shop, the doctors' surgery, the hair dresser, the bus stops and one of the two village pubs. Parking outside the Primary School, with its hazard for children and families using the Primary School, is another localised problem area. In addition, many residents of Billesdon do not have a garage: their cars are parked on the village streets, with consequent hazards for pedestrians and difficulties for the flow of traffic through the village.
- 🍃 **Footpaths:** the maintenance of existing, and the creation of new, footpaths throughout the Parish are a vital part of maintaining the rural atmosphere of the locality. In particular the centre of the village, and its services, should remain accessible on foot to as many residents in the Parish as possible.
- 🍃 **Protecting and enhancing the rural landscape and natural environment:** there is strong support to work with other agencies in the preservation of woodland and hedgerows, and the promotion of biodiversity, including wetlands and wildlife corridors. There is also community support for considering the impact on landscapes of new housing, non-agricultural land uses and other developments, such as wind farms.
- 🍃 **Promoting Healthy Lifestyles:** the community considers that there are insufficient public green open spaces, footpaths, bridleways and safe cycling routes in the Parish to meet local needs. The Parish has no playing

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field, nor, with the exception of the Play Area on Gaulby Road, the tennis court at The Coplow Centre and the cricket club, any specific outdoor recreational facilities for either young or old.

- Addressing Climate Change: there is concern in the Community about climate change and a determination to make a positive contribution to mitigating the impact of development by implementing sustainable energy-neutral practices.

Sustainable Development

3.2 The Neighbourhood Plan must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- an **economic** objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- a **social** objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- an **environmental** objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

3.3 The Plan shows what sustainable development in the Billesdon Neighbourhood Area means in practice.

Vision

3.4 In setting out the aims for the Neighbourhood Plan it is vital to consider how Billesdon should be at the end of the plan period. The Neighbourhood Plan needs to be aspirational, but realistic.

3.5 The following Community Vision for Billesdon was developed for the first Neighbourhood Plan following community consultation events and questionnaire surveys of young people and the formally constituted groups, societies and organisations in the Parish. This Vision comprises nine broad objectives which have been retained for the Neighbourhood Plan Review and which continue to shape the Plan's planning policies:

A village whose rural character and sense of 'community' have been maintained

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- 3.6 The overwhelming view of local people is that the strengths of Billesdon lie in a strong sense of community and an identity as a rural village. The overall vision for the Billesdon Neighbourhood Plan is to conserve this rural village character.

A rural village whose appearance has been preserved by the managed integration of new housing built to high standards of design, including energy conservation features

- 3.7 The core of Billesdon Village is a conservation area with a wide range of listed buildings and other heritage assets that together create a distinctive village setting. The Village still retains its 'compact' appearance and, at present, the majority of people living in the Village are within 10 minutes' walk of its focal point - the Market Place. Although the Village will grow, this compact and attractive character should be conserved, for the benefit of residents and visitors alike.

A rural community that actively responds to environmental issues and seeks to protect and enhance its countryside landscape, wildlife habitats and biodiversity

- 3.8 In consultation events, the community has expressed its commitment to landscape, nature conservation, protection of its local green open spaces and combating climate change. Residents have a close relationship with the open countryside: most live within 5 minutes' walk of the surrounding open farmland. Maintaining the compactness of the Village, together with enhanced footpath access, would underpin this close relationship with the open countryside.

A rural village who's through-traffic and parking problems have been contained at manageable proportions

- 3.9 The community has expressed a clear wish to remain free of urban and suburban traffic management infrastructure. Nevertheless, increasing traffic volumes through and within the Village pose significant problems, including the parking of cars. The community supports management methods suited to a rural village that may combat these problems, as well as developments that promote public transport, walking and cycling, rather than use of the car.

A rural community containing an integrated mix of people by age, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation and disability

- 3.10 Billesdon's strong sense of community rests on the successful integration of people with a wide range of personal characteristics. There is a low crime rate, a high participation rate in community events and a range of volunteer groups that provide care within the community. The community is committed to sustaining and developing these features.

A rural community whose housing needs have been met mainly through the development of a mixture of house types built on a restricted number of sites integral to the village of Billesdon

- 3.11 The community recognises that some growth in its stock of housing is needed to underpin population growth for sustainable development. A mixture of

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housing types would maintain the broad age range of the community, while a phased expansion of new housing would maintain the strong sense of community. A restriction of new housing to a few sites integral to the Village would enable its character to be retained.

A rural community whose varied educational, medical, recreational, leisure and retail needs are met by a range of sustainable services and facilities.

- 3.12 The village of Billesdon will continue to act as a centre for the surrounding area, not just its residents. There is a need to ensure the sustainability of a range of different services, including for employment, shopping, recreation, leisure, health and education, through adaptation and development.

A rural community supported by a strong local economy

- 3.13 Billesdon supports a wide range of small businesses, although a significant number of residents commute to nearby towns for employment or are retired. The development of local employment opportunities, supported by an improved broadband service, would maintain a strong local economy, reduce the reliance on commuting and retain young people within the community.

A rural community that plays its part in reducing and mitigating environmental degradation and climate change

- 3.14 The community will seek to minimise traffic flows within the Village, encourage energy efficiency and renewable energy production (with the aim of reducing the overall carbon footprint of the community) and create new wildlife habitats and corridors around the Village.

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4. Housing

Harborough Local Plan 2011-2031

- 4.1 The Harborough Local Plan was adopted in April 2019.
- 4.2 The Local Plan identifies Strategic Development Areas (SDAs) East of Lutterworth and at Scraftoft North, as the principal means of meeting Harborough District's housing and employment needs. Market Harborough is already committed to receiving about 1,500 new homes in the Market Harborough Strategic Development Area to the north-west of the town.
- 4.3 Billesdon is identified as a Rural Centre and as a focus for rural affordable and market housing. There are five other Rural Centres – Fleckney, Great Glen, Houghton on the Hill, Husbands Bosworth, The Kibworths and Ullesthorpe. Local Plan Policy H1 requires Billesdon village to provide for a minimum of 10 new homes to 2031. This is in addition to existing commitments which include the housing sites allocated in the first Billesdon Neighbourhood Plan.

Housing Supply

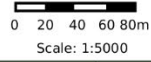
- 4.4 Following considerable community consultation, the first Billesdon Neighbourhood Plan allocated two sites for housing development:

Land to the north of High Acres, Uppingham Road

- 4.5 Outline planning permission (16/01819/OUT) for 35 dwellings was approved, with all matters reserved other than access, on 18 December 2018. An application for reserved matters (21/02089/REM), including details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale, was approved on 26 October 2021.



Figure 4: Approved High Acres layout



Housing Commitments (10+)



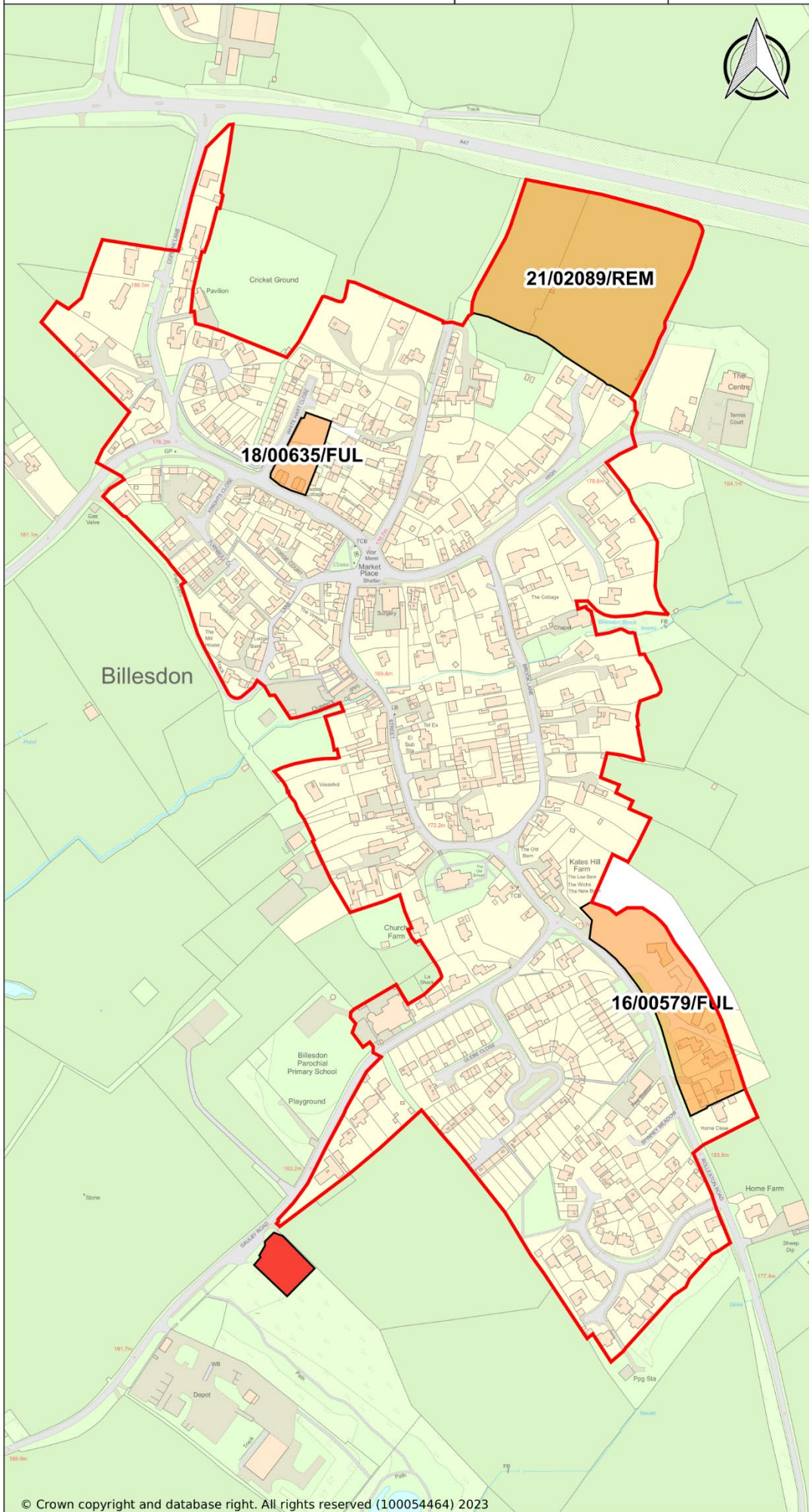
Limits to Development



Housing Allocation



Neighbourhood Area



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Land east of Rolleston Road

4.6 Detailed planning permission (16/00579/FUL) was granted for 10 dwellings on 21 December 2017 east of Kates Hill Farm. This development is well underway.



Figure 5: Kates Hill development

4.7 In addition, full planning permission (18/00635/FUL) was granted for the

redevelopment of the former White Hart Garage on Leicester Road for 10 dwellings on 29 March 2019. This development is nearing completion.

4.8 The first Billesdon Neighbourhood Plan also allocated the former lorry park on Gaulby Road as a Housing Reserve Site to be brought forward if it was required to address a shortfall in the supply of housing for Billesdon.

4.9 Since 1 April 2019, 18 new dwellings, that were not previously allocated, have been permitted (to 31 March 2022) within Billesdon. This means that the residual requirement for Billesdon to provide at least 10 dwellings has been met.

Policy BPr1: Housing Requirement

The housing requirement for Billesdon Neighbourhood Area for the period 2019 to 2031 is a minimum of 10 dwellings. This will be met by committed developments of 63 dwellings, the allocation of a site at the former lorry park on Gaulby Road for the development of approximately five dwellings in accordance with Policy BPr3, up to 10 dwellings as part of a mixed-use development at the former Highway Depot on Gaulby Road in accordance with Policy BPr8, and windfall development in accordance with Policy BPr2.

Harborough Local Plan Review

4.10 Harborough District Council has commenced a review of the Harborough Local Plan, but little progress has been made and adoption is not expected until 2026. Consequently, the housing requirement for Billesdon beyond the existing plan period to 2031 is unknown.

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- 4.11 Rather than wait for the new Local Plan to be adopted, the Parish Council is keen to press ahead with its Neighbourhood Plan Review. However, a further review is likely to be required, especially if there is a need to allocate additional housing or employment sites to meet new requirements.

Infill Housing

- 4.12 The Harborough Local Plan identifies Billesdon village as a settlement suitable for infill development. This refers to the development of vacant and under-developed land within the main built-up areas of the village.
- 4.13 Limits to Development for Billesdon have been used to guide development for many years but are not longer defined by the Harborough Local Plan. To clarify where development would be acceptable, our Neighbourhood Plan defines new Limits to Development which take account of the character of the village, recent and proposed developments. Outside the Billesdon Limits to Development, new build residential development will not normally be permitted.

Policy BPr2: Infill

Housing development within the Billesdon Limits to Development, as defined on Map 2, will be supported if the development:

- a. Is in keeping with the scale, form and character of its surroundings;
- b. Uses traditional materials of the local area using high-level craft in their application;
- c. Protects important features such as traditional walls, hedgerows and trees;
- d. Incorporates measures to mitigate against and adapt to climate change in accordance with Policy BPr21;
- e. Does not significantly adversely affect the amenities of residents in the area, including daylight/sunlight, privacy, air quality, noise and light pollution; and
- f. Has safe and suitable access to the site for all people.

Outside the Billesdon Limits to Development housing development will be determined in accordance with Harborough Local Plan Policy GD4.

Gaulby Road Lorry Park

4.14 The former lorry park on Gaulby Road was allocated in the first Billesdon Neighbourhood Plan as a Housing Reserve Site to be brought forward if it was required to address a shortfall in the supply of housing.

4.15 Although there is no immediate need to allocate additional housing sites in Billesdon, a sustainable choice of sites to



Figure 6: Gaulby Road lorry park

accommodate

housing will provide flexibility if circumstances change and allows the Neighbourhood Plan to remain up to date over a longer time scale. As a brownfield site, we can no longer see a good reason for putting back the development of the former lorry park site, especially given the slightly longer period that we are planning. The housing allocation will provide Billesdon with additional, although limited, protection from speculative development.

Policy BPr3: Gaulby Road Lorry Park

0.16 hectares of land east of Gaulby Road, as shown on Map 2, is allocated for housing development. Development will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- a. The development shall provide approximately 5 dwellings;
- b. A landscaping scheme should be implemented to provide for an improvement in biodiversity to include the retention of important boundary trees and hedges and their reinforcement using native species;
- c. The design of the development should reflect the distinctive and traditional character of Billesdon and take account of the setting of the adjoining Billesdon Woodland Pool;
- d. The site shall be cleared, and any contamination present safely remediated prior to the commencement of any development; and
- e. The removal of security fencing along the site boundaries.

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Housing Mix

- 4.16 In planning for new homes, there should be a mix of housing to meet the needs of people living locally. The [2022 Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Need Assessment](#) identifies a range of factors which influence the need for different types of homes. This includes demographic trends, and in particular a growing older population, market dynamics and affordability.
- 4.17 For Harborough District Council, the appropriate mix of homes of different sizes needed in the market and affordable sectors is as follows:

	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4+ bedrooms
Market Housing	5%	35%	40%	20%
Social/Affordable Rented Housing	35%	40%	20%	5%
Affordable Home Ownership Housing	20%	40%	30%	10%

- 4.18 Within this context, new housing also needs to reflect local characteristics. Taking into consideration the housing profile of Billesdon new housing development also needs to take account of:

- 🌿 Billesdon parish, at the time of the 2021 census, had a high percentage of over 65s (28.5%) compared to the district (22%) and national level (18.4%).
- 🌿 31.5% of all households in Billesdon parish are one-person households compared with 26% in Harborough district (2021 Census).
- 🌿 Billesdon parish had, at the time of the 2011 census, had a high percentage of home owned outright (45.5%) compared to the national level (32.5%).
- 🌿 House prices are high. The average sold price for a property in Billesdon in the last 12 months is £593,450 and £363,634 in Market Harborough².

Housing needs of older people

- 4.19 The 2021 Census shows that 28.5% of the parish's population was aged 65 and over. The older person population of Leicestershire is projected to increase significantly. The HENA forecasts that in Leicestershire, the total number of people aged 65 and over is projected to increase by 45% over the 22-years to 2041. This compares with overall population growth of 16% and an increase in the under 65 population of 9%. The projections show an increase in the population aged 65 and over of 64,900 people – population growth of people aged 65 and over accounts for 56% of the total projected population change. The greatest actual change is projected to occur in the 75-84 age band, increasing by 29,571 people, while the greatest percentage

² Zoopla May 2022

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change is projected to occur in the 85+ age band, increasing by 87.7%. This will obviously pose significant challenges in terms of providing support for the very oldest residents in the county.

Policy BPr4: Housing Mix

New housing development shall provide for a mix of housing types that will be informed by the most up to date strategic Housing Needs Assessment and local evidence of housing need. Applicants will need to demonstrate how the housing needs of older households will be met.

Affordable Housing

- 4.20 Affordable housing is housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers). Affordable housing can include affordable housing for rent, starter homes, discounted market sales housing and other affordable routes to home ownership. New affordable housing will be allocated initially to people with a local connection, including those living, working or with close family ties in Billesdon parish.
- 4.21 The Harborough Local Plan requires 40% of new dwellings on large sites to be affordable. Harborough District Council may also accept an affordable bungalow instead of two affordable houses. Consequently, the site east of Kates Hill Farm will provide two affordable bungalows and the site north of High Acres, Uppingham Road is expected to provide 10 affordable dwellings.
- 4.22 In accordance with Local Plan Policy H2, 75% of affordable dwellings should be affordable or socially rented and about 25% low-cost home ownership products.

Rural Exception Sites

- 4.23 Rural exception sites are small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity in places which would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.
- 4.24 There are currently no plans to develop a rural exception site in Billesdon. However, should a need be identified, Harborough Local Plan Policy H3 will guide such developments.

First Homes

- 4.25 First Homes are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing and should be considered to meet the definition of 'affordable housing' for planning purposes. Specifically, First Homes are discounted market sale units which:

🌱 must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value;

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- are sold to a person or persons meeting eligibility criteria;
 - on their first sale, will have a restriction registered on the title at HM Land Registry to ensure this discount and certain other restrictions are passed on at each subsequent title transfer; and,
 - after the discount has been applied, the first sale must be at a price no higher than £250,000.
- 4.26 First Homes are the Government's preferred discounted market tenure and should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations.
- 4.27 Our Neighbourhood Plan is expected to take account of the new First Homes requirements.

Policy BPr5: Affordable Housing

All affordable housing will be subject to conditions, or a planning obligation will be sought, to ensure that when homes are allocated, priority is given to people with a local connection to Billesdon parish (i.e. including living, working or with close family ties in the Area). The 25% low-cost home ownership required by Local Plan Policy H2 will be replaced by the Government's First Homes discounted market homes requirements.



5. Employment

- 5.1 There are no large or medium sized employers within the Parish. However, a range of businesses operates from the Park Farm Business Units on the boundary of Billesdon within the Parish of Skeffington. The main employment is based around agriculture, the school and a number of small businesses. With very few employment opportunities in Billesdon, many residents commute to work in Market Harborough, Leicester and elsewhere. Public transport services are poor, so around 54.3% of workers travel to work by car or van compared with the national figure of 44.5% (2021 Census).
- 5.2 A significant number of residents would establish or expand businesses within the Parish if there were suitable accommodation. So, the Plan supports economic growth in Billesdon in order to create jobs and prosperity, reduce the need for people to travel to work by car, and provide opportunities for the expansion and growth of local enterprise.

Working from home

- 5.3 While working from home may not be a suitable option for every employee in every business, using home as a working base for at least part of the week offers several benefits for business. For example, home working can help working parents with childcare responsibilities.

- 5.4 In April 2020, nationally, 46.6% of people in employment did some work at home. Of those who did some work from home, 86% did so because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The crisis is likely to cause a permanent shift to



Figure 7: Working from home

- homeworking. The 2021 Census shows that 38.1% of people aged 16 years and over in employment work mainly at or from home, compared with the national average of 35.1%.
- 5.5 Planning permission is not normally required to home work or to run a business from home, if a house remains a private residence first and business second. With a growing proportion of residents working from home, our Plan responds positively to enable homeworking to grow.

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Policy BPr6: Working from Home

Planning permission for development that enables home working will be granted if the development:

- a. is in keeping with the scale, form and character of its surroundings;
- b. does not significantly adversely affect the amenities of residents in the area;
- c. does not significantly increase vehicular traffic flow on Brook Lane and Church Street; and
- d. has safe and suitable access to the site for all people.

Internet

- 5.6 Internet connectivity, be it for personal and home use or to support businesses, is an essential requirement today and its use will only grow in the future. With the modern commercial use of the internet for business trading, supplier and customer management, internet trading, the growth of wireless devices, smartphones, tablets etc, the growth of social media, online gaming and on-demand television, high-speed internet connections have become essential to modern life and without which rural businesses and communities cannot prosper.
- 5.7 Traditional connections cannot handle the data volumes and speeds required to make realistic use of the technology. This can only be delivered by making fibre-optic based internet connections accessible.
- 5.8 At the time that the first Billesdon Neighbourhood Plan was prepared, local internet connection speeds were lower than 2Mbps. [Openreach's broadband checker](#) shows that Superfast broadband is now available to most homes in the area, however the superfast broadband network is Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) which is a connectivity technology that is based on a combination of fibre optic cable and copper cable. The further a property is from the local street cabinet, the slower the connection is likely to be.
- 5.9 Ultrafast full fibre broadband is being rolled out across much of the country. At 1 Gbps, it's up to 10 times faster than the average home broadband connection. Openreach's current build plans suggest that Billesdon will benefit from Ultrafast Full Fibre by December 2025. We believe that new developments should have access to ultrafast broadband (of at least 100Mbps) and allow for Fibre to the Premise (FTTP) access for each property.

Policy BPr7: Ultrafast Broadband

New development should incorporate open access ducting to industry standards, to enable all new premises and homes to be directly served by fibre optic broadband technology (Fibre to the Premise). Exceptions will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that making such provision would render the development unviable.

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Former Highway Depot (Gaulby Road)

- 5.10 The site of the former Leicestershire County Council (Highways) Depot is now vacant. The redevelopment of the site for business use was supported by the first Neighbourhood Plan and outline planning permission (16/00273/OUT) for 3,630 square metres of business and storage or distribution employment land was approved in March 2017.



Figure 8: Former Highway Depot

- 5.11 Unfortunately, the development was not viable and the planning permission has now lapsed. Overall, the marketability and attractiveness of the site for employment development is low, as demand is unlikely to be high due to its rural location, scale, local road network and poor public transport links. The site is not identified as either a Key or General Employment Area by the Harborough Local Plan. Leicestershire County Council is now promoting the site for housing development.
- 5.12 The redevelopment of the site for business use to provide opportunities for the expansion of existing businesses and the creation of new businesses remains an important local objective. We also want to secure a new use for the site to prevent it from becoming an eyesore and prone to vandalism.
- 5.13 In recognition of the previous difficulties in developing the site, we will provide some additional flexibilities to enable redevelopment, provided the site is used primarily for business use. To that end, up to 10 dwellings could be developed on part of the site to support prospective self-builders and custom builders.
- 5.14 Further flexibility is provided following a significant reform of the Use Classes Order which was announced on 21 July 2020 which saw the creation of Use Class E – Commercial, business and service. This includes light industry, shops, offices, cafes, restaurants, GP surgeries, creches and gyms. This means that a wider mix of commercial and business activity would be acceptable on the site.

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- 5.15 We are also aware of a proposal to close the existing Fire Station on Rolleston Road and relocate it to the former Highway Depot site along with training facilities. This would allow the exiting Fire Station to be redeveloped in accordance with Neighbourhood Plan Policy BPr2. The development of a new Fire and Rescue Station with Training Facility provides a suitable, alternative re-use of the site.
- 5.16 It remains the case, that the redevelopment of the Depot site should complement the adjoining Billesdon Woodland Pool and discourage the movement of HGVs through the village.

Policy BPr8: The Former Highway Depot (Gaulby Road)

The redevelopment of the former Highway Depot, Gaulby Road, as defined on the Policies Map, will be supported where it is for

- a. mixed-use development comprising:
 - i. a minimum of one hectare for Commercial, Business and Service, and Local Community (Classes E and F2 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended)) uses. The provision of a small number of starter or 'grow-on' units will be supported; and
 - ii. a maximum of 10 dwellings on up to 0.5 hectares. Dwellings should be located at the site frontage. These plots should be serviced and sold at an appropriate price, to self-builders or custom builders unless, having been made available and marketed appropriately for at least 12 months, they have not sold in which case plots may either remain on the open market or be built out by a developer; or
- b. A Fire and Rescue Station with Training Facility.

The redevelopment of the site should:

- a. Include measures to ensure that the development takes place in a comprehensive but phased manner and avoids piecemeal development;
- b. not significantly adversely affect the amenities of existing or new residents in the area;
- c. include parking provision for allotment holders and visitors to the adjoining Woodland Pool;
- d. in consultation with the Highway Authority, include measures to discourage HGVs from entering and leaving the site via the centre of Billesdon village. These measures are to include weight restrictions and signage to the site from the A47;
- e. ensure that the site is cleared, and any contamination present safely remediated prior to the commencement of any development;



- f. not have a greater adverse impact on the nature conservation interests or the quiet enjoyment of the adjoining wildlife site than the previous use. Particular regard shall be paid to the impact of noise, disturbance and light pollution;
- g. ensure that important trees and hedgerows on the site, including those along the site boundaries, are to be retained within a landscaping scheme.

Business in the Countryside

- 5.17 A significant number of businesses are already located on the countryside, including agriculture, holiday accommodation, nurseries, equestrian activities, motorsport and vehicle services, a builder, dog grooming and animal rescue centre.
- 5.18 To support the rural economy and protect the open countryside from new development, the Plan supports the sustainable growth and expansion of business and enterprise through the conversion of existing buildings in the countryside.
- 5.19 The General Permitted Development (England) Order 2015 already allows for change of use from an agricultural building (and land within its curtilage) to 'flexible commercial use' under certain circumstances. The rules mean that not all rural buildings benefit from these permitted development rights so Policy BPr9 allows further change through the conversion of existing rural buildings. However, the proposed uses must be appropriate in scale, form, impact, character and siting to their location in the countryside.

Policy BPr9: Business in the Countryside

In addition to developments permitted by the General Development Orders, planning permission for the conversion or re-use of buildings in the countryside will be supported where the development is for Commercial, Business and Service, and Local Community (Classes E and F2 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended)) uses.

The buildings to be converted or re-used should be of a construction that is suitable for the development proposed without the need for major, additional construction works. The development should:

- a. be in keeping with the scale, form and character of its surroundings;
- b. have good access to and from the A47 and not generate significant additional traffic through Billesdon Village; and
- c. have safe and suitable access to the site for all people.

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6. Services and Facilities

Key Services and Facilities

- 6.1 Harborough Local Plan Policy SS1 (The spatial strategy) identifies Billesdon as a Rural Centre. Rural centres across the district (the others being The Kibworths, Fleckney, Great Glen, Ullesthorpe, Husbands Bosworth and Houghton on the Hill) all have at least four of the six key services (general practitioner, library, public house, primary school, food shop, post office). Of these key services, Billesdon has a food shop/general store, a GP surgery, a community post office, a primary school and two public houses. In addition, there is a hairdressing salon, a retained fire station, church, chapel and The Coplow Centre. The Leicestershire County Council mobile library visits Billesdon once a month.
- 6.2 The retention of key local services and community facilities is important for the long-term sustainability of Billesdon and the new developments proposed in the Plan should help their viability. Policy HC2 of the Harborough Local Plan aims to protect against the loss of rural services but does not identify the community facilities to be retained.

Policy BPr10: Retention of Key Services and Facilities

The following facilities will be protected and development which assists their diversification and improved accessibility is supported in accordance with Harborough Local Plan Policy HC2:

Billesdon Church of England Primary School
Billesdon Surgery
The Coplow Centre
Billesdon Post Office
Billesdon General Store (D E & S A Hoare)
New Greyhound PH
The Queens Head PH

Billesdon Church of England Primary School

- 6.3 [Billesdon Church of England Primary School](#) provides education to 4-11 year olds and has a capacity of 105 pupils. It is a smaller-than-average sized primary school with four classes. The Primary School catchment area includes Billesdon, Illston on the Hill, Rolleston, New Inn, Gaulby, Kings Norton and Frisby. The 2017 Ofsted inspection recognised the School as being good.
- 6.4 To provide the additional primary school places generated by new housing developments, the County Council is likely to request a contribution for the Primary School sector. There are already associated traffic/parking problems outside the School at drop-off and pick-up times, and they need to be addressed if the school is expanded.

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6.5 There are no secondary schools within a three-mile walking distance of Billesdon and so buses and taxis are provided through the village by the County Council's School Transport Service. Billesdon lies within the current catchment areas of Welland Park Academy and Robert Smyth Academy in Market Harborough.



Figure 9: Billesdon Church of England Primary School

Billesdon Surgery

6.6 Billesdon Surgery is in the centre of the village at the Market Place and offers a range of services and clinics. There is also a dispensary for prescriptions. East Leicestershire and Rutland CCG is requesting contributions from developers to increase the number of GP and nurse sessions to meet the needs of the population generated by new housing development.

6.7 However, the community has expressed concern about parking problems in the mornings, when the Market Place and surrounding roads are congested. The increase in visits to the Surgery, associated with housing growth, will make these problems worse.

Billesdon Allotments

6.8 Use of allotments for home grown fruit and vegetables are now very popular and very much in demand. Billesdon's Allotments are located on a 0.1 hectare site adjoining the Woodland Pool on Gaulby Road.



Figure 10: Billesdon Allotments

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The Coplow Centre

6.9 The Coplow Centre is a multi-functional community facility opened in 1997, with funding from Harborough District Council, other grants, and monies raised by the people of Billesdon, including the sale of the former village hall. With a large and adaptable event



Figure 11: The Coplow Centre

hall, a separate meeting room, floodlit multi-use sports court, kitchen and parking for 50 cars, it provides for a range of community and sporting events. The car park has two 22kW electric vehicle charging points, a building management system and solar panels spanning the entire roof.

6.10 The Centre is in regular use by a range of groups and classes including Billesdon Drama Society, annual pantomime, table tennis club, fitness classes and bridge societies. The Centre is constantly in use throughout the week and facilities require upgrading and expansion to accommodate a growing population.

Sport and Recreation

6.11 Although the Primary School has a sports field, it is not open to use by the Community. There is a thriving Cricket Club in the village, with several teams that play in local leagues at senior and junior levels. The cricket pitch is on Coplow Lane. There is also a small Play Area on Gaulby Road for young children which is managed by the Parish Council.



Figure 12: Gaulby Road play area

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- 6.12 There is no public playing field – a serious deficiency for a Rural Centre. There is good community support for the provision of a public playing field for the recreation and healthy living of residents of all ages, but particularly young people. The provision of a playing field would enable children, young people and adults to engage in informal physical activity and encourage the development of competitive team sports. Ideally, a new playing field could be located adjacent to the Coplow Centre, which is already the focus for most community leisure activity.

Retail

- 6.13 Billesdon has a range of shops to meet many of the day-to-day requirements of local people. The Village has a small food shop/general store situated in the Market Place in the centre of the Village. Billesdon has a Community Post Office, sited in Church Street, providing postal and some retail services to the village and the wider area. There is also a Hairdressing Salon on Uppingham Road. Two public houses, both serving meals, are The Queen’s Head, in Church Street, and The New Greyhound, in Market Place; they are both popular with local residents and visitors.
- 6.14 The Community has identified several other retail services that the residents would use in the village, including a coffee shop, chemist and farm shop.
- 6.15 The conversion of existing buildings is strongly preferred, provided that existing services and facilities are not threatened by such developments. Our Neighbourhood Plan policies are sufficiently flexible to allow for the conversion of buildings in the countryside (Policy BPr9) and the redevelopment of the former Highway Depot (Policy BPr8) to provide new opportunities for retail businesses.

Policy BPr11: Retail

The extension of existing shops and leisure uses, including public houses, which are designed to improve their viability, will be supported.

Infrastructure

- 6.16 New development will have some impact on the existing, and the need for new, infrastructure, services and amenities. Sometimes these impacts can be detrimental and so developers must expect to contribute towards the cost of providing additional infrastructure.
- 6.17 To enable new housing development to take place, there will need to be improvements to local services and facilities. For example, the proposed development to the north of High Acres, Uppingham Road will make contributions to primary education, community facilities, public open space and healthcare. However, the Neighbourhood Plan must be deliverable. Therefore, the developments identified in the Plan should not be subject to such a scale of obligations and burdens that their viable implementation is threatened.

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- 6.18 There are also circumstances where contributions for affordable housing and tariff style planning obligations (section 106 planning obligations) should not be sought from small-scale and self-build development.

Policy BPr12: Infrastructure

New development will be supported by the provision of new or improved infrastructure, together with financial contributions for the following off-site infrastructure requirements where appropriate:

- a. The improvement, remodelling or enhancement of:
 - i. Billesdon Church of England Primary School
 - ii. Billesdon Surgery
 - iii. The Coplow Centre
- b. The provision of a community playing field;
- c. Countryside access improvements in accordance with Policy BPr15;
- d. Traffic and parking management measures including:
 - i. measures that address local traffic congestion and parking problems associated with Billesdon Surgery;
 - ii. measures that address local traffic congestion and parking problems associated with Billesdon Church of England Primary School;
- e. Community infrastructure improvements including the provision of parish notice boards, seats, children's play area equipment, bus shelters, litter bins.

Contributions are governed by the provisions of the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010. To ensure the viability of housing development, the costs of the Plan's requirements may be applied flexibly where it is demonstrated that they are likely to make the development undeliverable.

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7. Traffic and Transport

Traffic

- 7.1 Most of the roads within the Village of Billesdon are not well suited to modern traffic. Over the years, local people have expressed concerns about road safety, noise and vehicle emissions associated with the volume and speed of traffic passing through the centre of the village. The community wants to minimise the impact of additional traffic generated by new development, especially along Brook Lane and Church Street which are particularly narrow. There is also concern about the speed and volume of vehicles passing the Primary School on Gaulby Road.
- 7.2 These concerns have been considered in the selection of development sites allocated in the first Neighbourhood Plan. Most of the new homes that are being planned for will have good vehicular access to the A47 without needing to pass through the centre of the village. The Plan, as regards the redevelopment of the former Highways Depot on Gaulby Road, will restrict lorry movements through the village.
- 7.3 The Plan does not propose specific traffic management measures, which have little local support. However, the Plan ensures that new development does not make the current situation significantly worse and Billesdon Parish Council continues to keep traffic management under review.

Policy BPr13: Traffic Management

With the exception of those developments allocated in Policies BPr3 and BPr8, new development will only be supported where it will not cause a significant increase in the volume of traffic using Brook Lane, Church Street or passing the Billesdon Primary School on Gaulby Road.

Parking

- 7.4 Some services and facilities have their own car parking: The Coplow Centre, the Community Post Office, the Chapel and the Queens Head pub. Other services and facilities have car parking on adjacent roads or they share the car park in the centre of the Village (Market Place). Parking is a particular problem in the mornings in the centre of the Village, around the shop, doctors' surgery, bus stops and New Greyhound pub. A similar problem exists outside the Primary School at those times when children are being taken to and from school.
- 7.5 The Plan is unable to propose a solution to the parking problem in the centre of the Village, as there is no land available to create an additional car park. The community does not want additional parking restrictions and the associated road markings and signage. However, new housing developments will include generous car parking spaces to minimise the need for on-street car parking within the Village and have regard to the level of public transport available. On

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the road outside the Primary School, the community favours some form of parking restriction, but not yellow lines.

- 7.6 The [Leicestershire Highways Design Guide](#) deals with highways and transportation infrastructure for new developments. The parking standards set out in this document are the minimum requirements for off-street parking which the Highway Authority will recommend when consulted on planning applications.

Buses

- 7.7 Billesdon is currently served by the [Centrebus 747](#) service between Leicester and Uppingham. It is an hourly service during peak hours and two-hourly off-peak. There is no night-time or Sunday service. The community would like to see a regular bus service to Market Harborough, which would provide residents with improved access to employment, retail and leisure opportunities in the closest main centre to Billesdon.
- 7.8 To encourage the use of sustainable transport, it is recommended all new houses should be provided with a Travel Pack containing information about the local area, advice on local transport bus services, cycle routes, taxi information, walking maps and journey planning assistance. The pack should also contain application forms for two, free, 6-month bus passes for the local bus service, to encourage the use of sustainable transport. Travel packs are not a land use policy requirement in this Plan.

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8. Natural Environment

- 8.1 Billesdon is a large, sparsely populated rural area with a strong agricultural identity. Local people value the intrinsic character and beauty of the Parish's countryside.

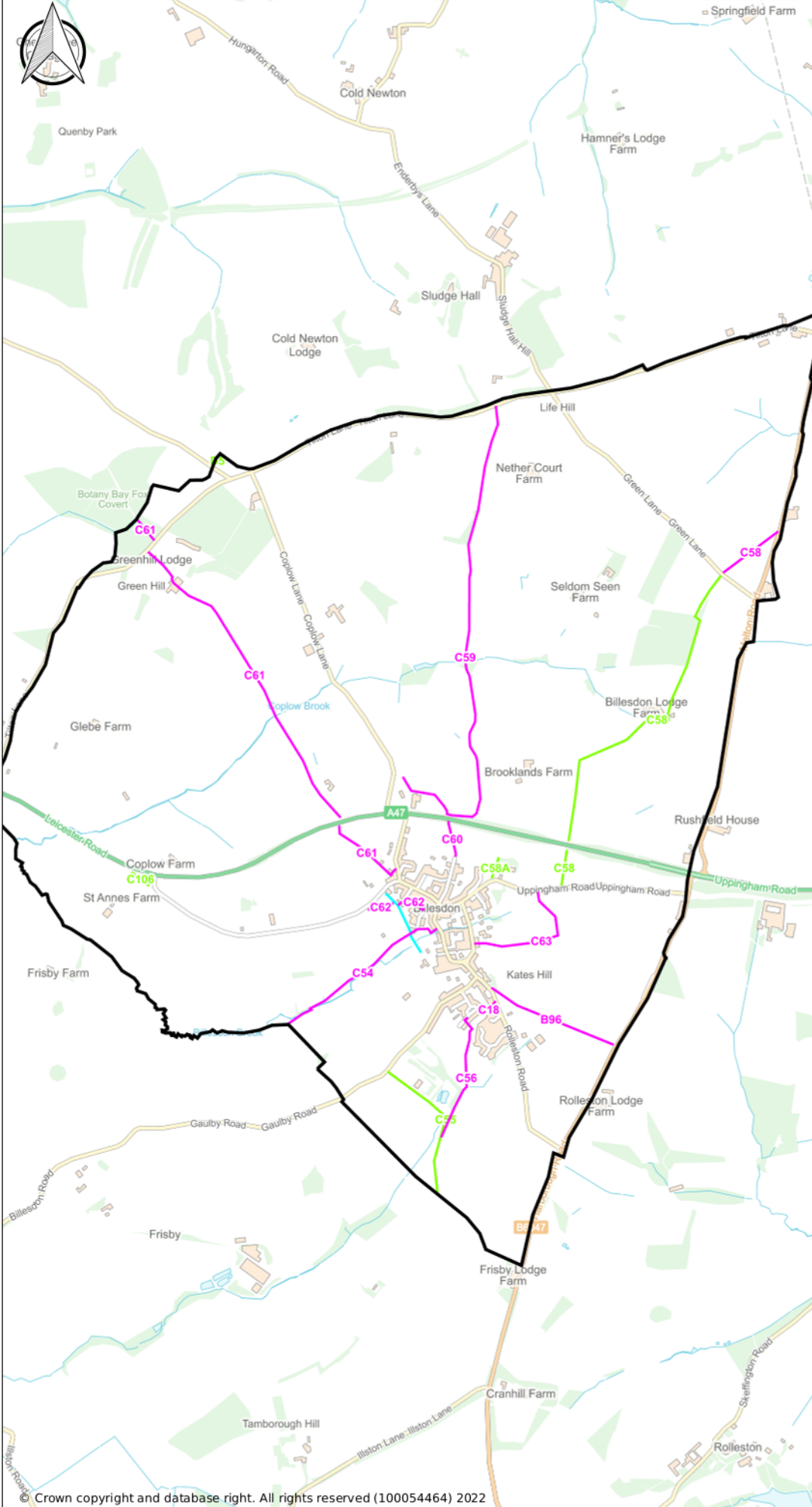
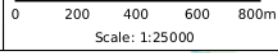
Countryside

- 8.2 The [2007 Harborough District Landscape Character Assessment](#) provides an understanding of the district's landscape, its evolution and future pressures. Billesdon is located within the High Leicestershire Landscape Character Area which covers the north of Harborough district.
- 8.3 The predominantly rural character area comprises undulating fields with a mix of pasture on the higher sloping land and arable farming on the lower, flatter land. Fields are divided by well-established hedgerows, with occasional mature hedgerow trees. A network of narrow country lanes, tracks and footpaths connect across the landscape interspersed by small thickets, copses and woodlands.
- 8.4 Extensive views from the higher ground reveal a pattern of small attractive villages, hamlets and farm buildings set within an agricultural landscape with traditional churches acting as distinctive features of the settlements.
- 8.5 Billesdon is typical of High Leicestershire – a compact village nestling in valley folds within a grazing and arable landscape. A notable landmark is the wooded hill of the Billesdon Coplow, which lies to the north-west of the parish. The Village gives the impression of being well wooded, with many mature trees in and around the settlement. In surrounding fields, the medieval ridge and furrow pattern is often visible and many field boundaries are defined by hedgerows.
- 8.6 The rural setting to Billesdon is highly valued by local people. It is important that the countryside is protected from unacceptable development which would harm its intrinsic value and rural character. The Harborough Local Plan strictly controls development in the countryside although certain forms of development are necessary to support rural life and the rural economy.

Policy BPr14: Countryside

The Countryside (land outside Limits to Development as defined on the Policies Map) will be protected for the sake of its intrinsic character, beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, the wealth of its natural resources and to ensure it may be enjoyed by all. Development in the Countryside will be strictly controlled in accordance with Harborough Local Plan Policies SS1, GD3 and GD4.

New development in the Countryside must be well mitigated to minimise landscape impacts. Opportunities for new woodland screen planting is encouraged as part of new development proposals.



- Byway**
- Bridleway**
- Footpath**
- Neighbourhood Area**

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Countryside Access

- 8.7 Billesdon has an extensive network of footpaths and bridleways both within the village and outside it into the surrounding countryside. These paths were originally part of an ancient network of tracks used to walk to the open fields, to market or between neighbouring villages, but they are now used almost exclusively for leisure activities. As such they are an appreciated and well-used community asset that contributes to health and wellbeing.
- 8.8 The Billesdon Walks booklet now includes 10 local walks and copies are available at the Post Office. Country walking brings benefits as a leisure activity that contributes to health and wellbeing. We are keen to see the existing network extended and enhanced.

Policy BPr15: Countryside Access

New development that improves access to existing or provides new publicly accessible open space will be supported. Provision will be particularly encouraged where it improves/provides new access to the countryside around Billesdon village.

Biodiversity

- 8.9 The community places considerable value on the enhancement of biodiversity in the Neighbourhood Area, including the creation of wildlife habitats, the conservation of native hedgerows, the planting of native trees and wildflowers, and the protection of wildlife corridors.
- 8.10 There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within the Neighbourhood Area. However, there are 11 Local Wildlife Sites and seven Historic Local Wildlife Sites³. They include woodland, trees, hedgerows, meadows and ponds.

Billesdon Woodland Pool

- 8.11 In 2002, following a management plan devised between Billesdon Wildlife Group and Leicestershire County Council, the [Billesdon Woodland Pool](#) was developed on the historic site of Prisoner of War Camp No.94.

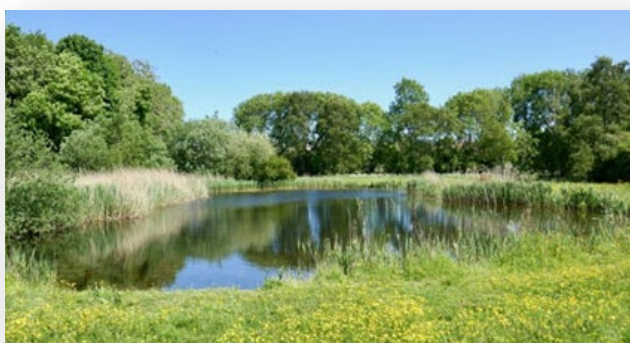


Figure 13: Billesdon Woodland Pool

³ These are sites known to have had important wildlife value in the past. They have not been surveyed on the ground since the 1980s/90s, but there is evidence from aerial photographs that they are still present. Surveys are needed to ascertain whether the sites still have value according to current local criteria.

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Used to house Italian, and later German, prisoners during WW2, the camp's football pitch was excavated in 2004 to create the pond. The 3.2 hectare site, all accessible by footpaths, now consists of a mixed habitat of wetland, wooded areas, grassland and scrub, hedges and ditches. The Woodland Pool is now designated as a Local Wildlife Site.

- 8.12 The pond attracts aquatic insects, dragonflies and damselflies plus frogs and toads, and a survey has established the presence of Great Crested Newts. Little Grebe and Moorhen regularly breed. The woodland's resident bird population includes tits, Blackbirds, Robins and Great Spotted Woodpecker, and swells in the spring with the arrival of migrants including warblers, Swifts and Swallows. Buzzard regularly fly over the Pool, as do Red Kite. The grassland supports a wide variety of insects including butterflies, moths, hoverflies, beetles, bugs and bees.



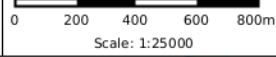
Figure 14: Billesdon Woodland Pool

Wildlife Corridors

- 8.13 The term 'wildlife corridor' is used to refer to any linear feature in the landscape that can be used for migration or dispersal of wildlife. Wildlife or biological corridors offer the possibility of linking habitats and reducing the isolation of populations. The principal wildlife corridors in Billesdon Parish are its watercourses.
- 8.14 The River Sence is a tributary of the larger River Soar. The river is known to support populations of water vole and native freshwater crayfish. The River Sence can be traced from Billesdon through Great Glen and then west (south of Wigston and South Wigston) until the confluence with the River Soar just to the west of Blaby. Coplow Brook, Billesdon Brook and Burton Brook are all tributaries of the River Sence.

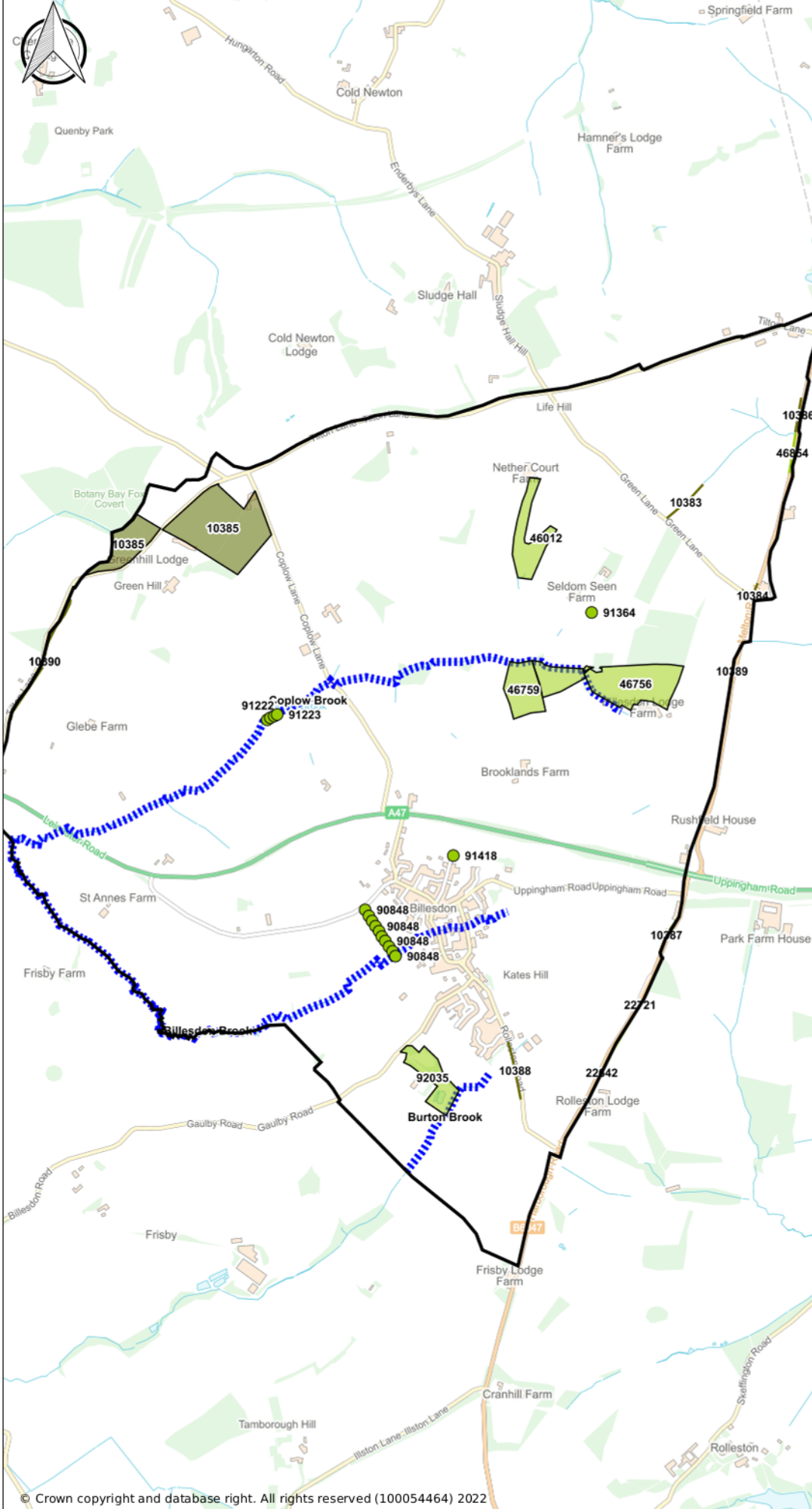
Biodiversity Net Gain

- 8.15 Biodiversity net gain is an approach which aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than beforehand. The National Planning Policy Framework encourages net gains for biodiversity to be sought through planning policies and decisions. Biodiversity net gain delivers measurable improvements for biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats in association with development. It is the Government's intention to apply a mandatory requirement for biodiversity net gain to be achieved for developments requiring planning permission under the Town and Country Planning 1990 will commence for new applications from November 2023.



Author:

Date: 10/06/2022



Wildlife Corridor

Historic Local Wildlife Site (watercourse, hedgerow)

Historic Local Wildlife Site

Local Wildlife Site (hedgerow, watercourse)

Local Wildlife Site (pond, tree)

Local Wildlife Site

Neighbourhood Area

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Policy BPr16: Ecology and Biodiversity

Development should not harm the network of local ecological features and habitats which include (as shown on Map 5) Local Wildlife Sites, Historic Local Wildlife Sites and Wildlife corridors.

New development will be expected to maintain and enhance existing ecological corridors and landscape features (such as watercourses, hedgerows and tree-lines) for biodiversity thus demonstrating overall net-gain. All new houses should integrate features such as bat boxes, bird boxes and hedgehog highways to support biodiversity.

Water Management

- 8.16 The National Planning Policy Framework sets strict tests to protect people and property from flooding which all local planning authorities are expected to follow. Where these tests are not met, national policy is clear that new development should not be allowed.

Flooding from Rivers (fluvial)

- 8.17 Flood risk is an important consideration in guiding the location of new development. Flood Zones refer to the probability of river flooding, ignoring the presence of defences. Most of the Neighbourhood Area is in Flood Risk Zone 1 (low risk) with agricultural land adjoining the Coplow Brook being in Flood Risk Zones 3 (high risk) and 2 (medium risk).
- 8.18 In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, development should be directed away from areas at risk of flooding and ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere.

Surface Water Flooding

- 8.19 Flooding from surface water runoff is usually caused by intense rainfall that may only last a few hours and usually occurs in lower lying areas, often where the drainage system is unable to cope with the volume of water. Surface water flooding problems are inextricably linked to issues of poor drainage, drain blockage and sewer flooding.
- 8.20 At times of high rainfall, surface water either accumulates in puddles or runs off quickly with a propensity to localised surface water flooding principally along the Billesdon Brook, Coplow Brook and Burton Brook. Therefore, developments should seek to reduce flood risk and incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). SuDS should ensure that the peak rate of run-off over the lifetime of the development, allowing for climate change, is no greater for the developed site than it was for the undeveloped site.
- 8.21 There are well-established national policies that manage development and flood risk, so there is no need for the Neighbourhood Plan to duplicate them.

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Policy BPr17: Water Management

Development sites should be built to manage surface water sustainably and utilise resources sustainably during use. Where appropriate development should incorporate:

- a. Sustainable Drainage systems (SuDS) unless demonstrated to be inappropriate. All schemes for the inclusions of SuDS should demonstrate they have considered all four aspects of good SuDS design, Quantity, Quality, Amenity and Biodiversity, and the SuDS and development will fit into the existing landscape. The completed SuDS schemes should be accompanied by a maintenance schedule detailing maintenance boundaries, responsible parties and arrangements to ensure that the SuDS are maintained in perpetuity;
- b. Surface water discharges that have been carried out in accordance with the drainage hierarchy, such that discharge to the public sewerage systems is avoided, where possible;
- c. Incorporate water efficient design and technology; and
- d. Protection of existing Drainage systems. No development shall prevent the continuation of existing natural or manmade drainage features, where watercourses or dry ditches are present within a development site, these should be retained and where possible enhanced.

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9. Local Green Space

9.1 National policy makes provision for local communities to identify green areas of importance to those communities, where development will not be permitted except in very special circumstances.



Figure 15: Market Place

The first Billesdon Neighbourhood Plan

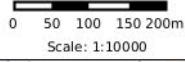
designated several Local Green Spaces and these have all been retained.

Policy BPr18: Local Green Spaces

The following sites (identified on the Map 6) have been designated as Local Green Spaces:

- 1 Cricket Ground
- 2 Leicester Road verges
- 3 Market Place
- 4 Uppingham Road
- 5 Cemetery
- 6 The Green
- 7 Church of St John the Baptist
- 8 Primary School Playground
- 9 Vicarage Close
- 10 Weare Close
- 11 Rolleston Road Amenity Area
- 12 Frontage to Chapel
- 13 Billesdon Woodland Pool
- 14 Billesdon Brook

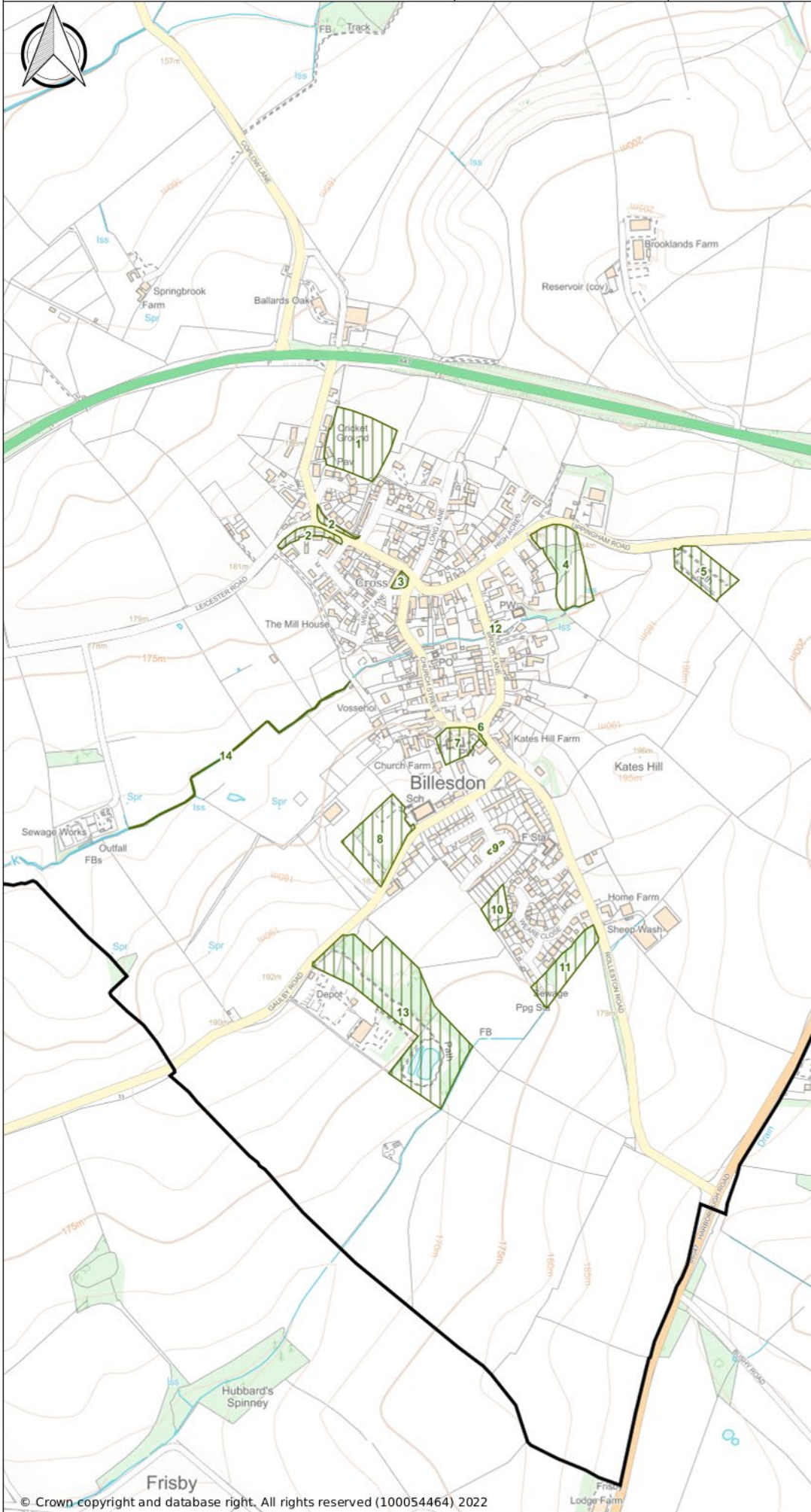
Development proposals within the designated local green spaces will only be supported in very special circumstances.



Local Green Space



Neighbourhood Area



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10. Heritage

Historic Development

- 10.1 Like many English villages, Billesdon's origins were ancient but few traces remain. Following Iron Age and Roman occupation of the hilly land around Life Hill to the north of the parish, the Anglo-Saxons moved down into the nearby valley watered by Billesdon and Coplow Brooks. The new settlement developed into a classic open field village, with communal cultivation of land in three open fields – Portbridge, Mill and Stonepitt. Repeated ploughing of the strips by teams of oxen created the ridge and furrow pattern that is so characteristic of the parish today, and animals grazed on common land near the Coplow.
- 10.2 In the mid-19th century Billesdon was a busy and prosperous place with a population of around 1000 at its peak in 1861. The village economy was boosted by regular coach services, the White Hart coaching inn and employment for several farriers and blacksmiths. Agriculture, especially stock-rearing, occupied most people, but framework knitting flourished around Bradley's Square and several brickworks, including a sizeable one on the eastern edge of the village, produced distinctive 'Billesdon Bricks'. The full range of basic needs was met by bakers, butchers, grocers, shoemakers, tailors, milliners, dressmakers, carpenters and bricklayers. There were also one or two more specialist trades, including the world famous taxidermist Thomas Potter. Following Lord Suffield's construction of lavish stables and kennels around the Quadrant in 1838, the Billesdon (later the Fernie) Hunt was periodically resident in the village, giving employment to assorted huntsmen, grooms, smiths, livery tailors and domestic servants.
- 10.3 Other reminders of Billesdon's past include the Cricket Club, founded in 1872 at the ground off Coplow Lane; the Women's Institute, constituted in 1917; and its offshoot in 1920, the Drama Society – all still going strong. No longer with us are the Village Hall, built in 1870 by the Ancient Order of Foresters to a design by the distinguished Leicester architect Mr Goddard and sadly demolished 125 years later. The Prisoner of War Camp and the Royal Observer Corps post on opposite sides of Gaulby Road are important reminders that Billesdon, like all communities, played its part during the World Wars of the 20th century.

Designated Heritage Assets

- 10.4 A Scheduled Monument, Listed Buildings and Conservation Area have already been designated under relevant legislation within the parish.
- 10.5 The National Planning Policy Framework requires that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or

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development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.

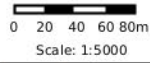
- 10.6 Substantial harm to or loss of a Grade II listed building should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, Grade I and II* listed buildings should be wholly exceptional.
- 10.7 Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.

Market Cross Scheduled Monument

- 10.8 Scheduling is shorthand for the process through which nationally important sites and monuments are given legal protection. The [Market Cross](#) is the only Scheduled Monument in the parish. It is a standing stone cross located on the western side of Market Place in the village of Billesdon. The cross, which is Listed Grade II, includes a base, consisting of a plinth, a medieval socket stone and a modern socket stone, the shaft and a cross-head. It is probably 13th or 14th century in origin and has modern additions.



Figure 16: Market Cross



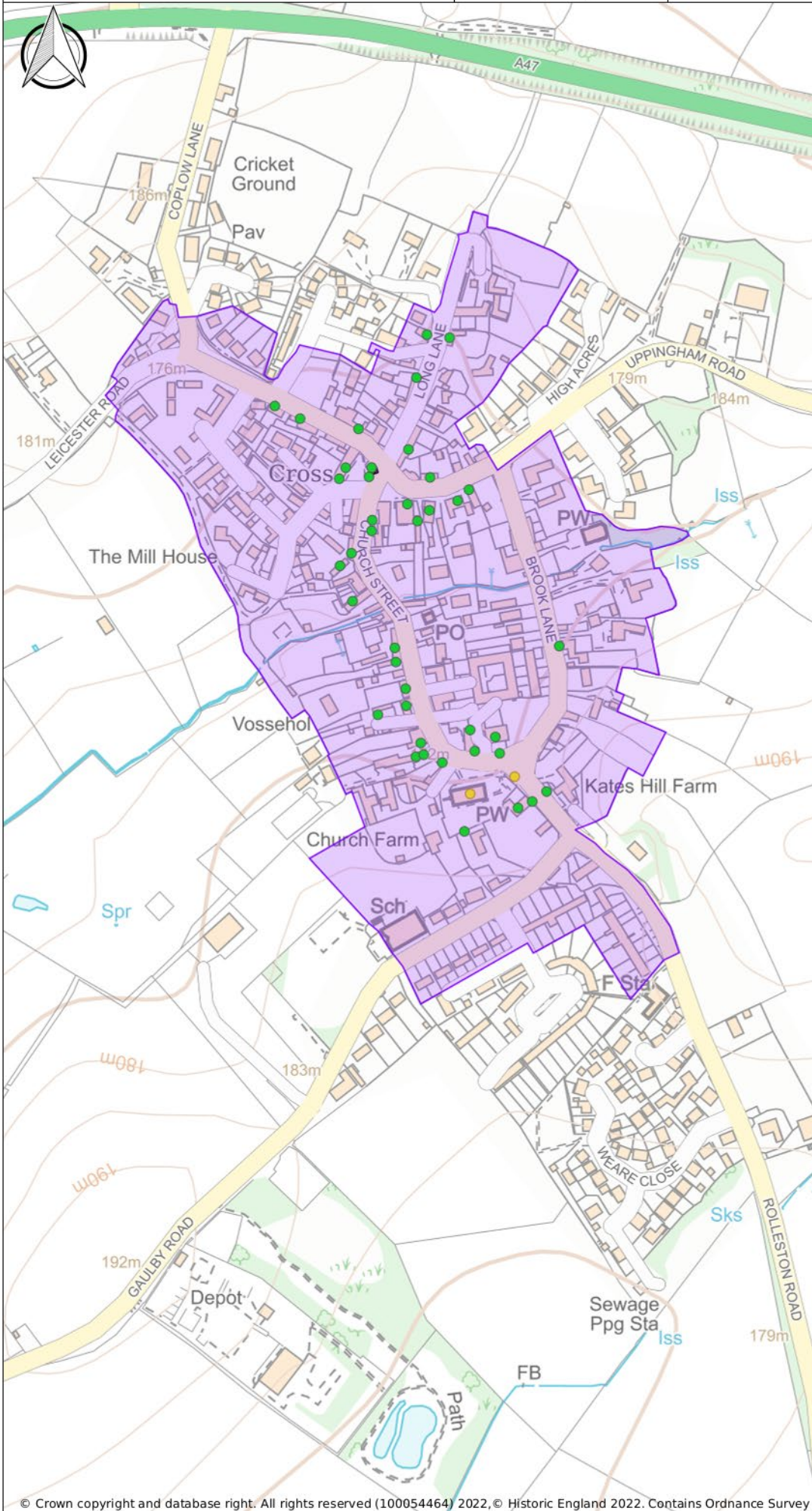
Scheduled Monuments



Listed Buildings



Conservation Area



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Listed Buildings

- 10.9 Listing a building marks its special architectural and historic interest and brings it under the consideration of the planning system, so that it can be protected for future generations.
- 10.10 The older a building is, the more likely it is to be listed. Most buildings built before 1700 which survive in anything like their original condition are listed, as are most of those built between 1700 and 1840.
- 🌿 Grade I buildings are of exceptional interest, nationally only 2.5% of Listed buildings are Grade I
 - 🌿 Grade II* buildings are particularly important buildings of more than special interest; 5.5% of Listed buildings are Grade II*
 - 🌿 Grade II buildings are of special interest; 92% of all Listed buildings are in this class and it is the most likely grade of listing for a homeowner.
- 10.11 When making a decision on all listed building consent applications or any decision on a planning application for development that affects a listed building or its setting, a local planning authority must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. This obligation, found in sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, applies to all decisions concerning listed buildings.
- 10.12 There are 43 Listed buildings in the Neighbourhood Area and other than Billesdon Coplow, all are in the village. All are Grade II listed except for Church of St John the Baptist and the old school which are Grade II*:
- 🌿 [16 Uppingham Road](#)
 - 🌿 [1 Church Street](#)
 - 🌿 [Pear Tree Cottage, 3 Church Street](#)
 - 🌿 [25 Church Street](#)
 - 🌿 [Boundary Wall to 27 Church Street](#)
 - 🌿 [Mowbray House, 8 Church Street](#)
 - 🌿 [Queen's Head Public House, 20 Church Street](#)
 - 🌿 [36 Church Street](#)
 - 🌿 [Ivy House, 44 Church Street](#)
 - 🌿 [Church Cottage, 46 Church Street](#)
 - 🌿 [School, Church Street](#)
 - 🌿 [8 Leicester Road](#)
 - 🌿 [Doone Cottage, 9 Long Lane](#)
 - 🌿 [Market Cross, Market Place](#)
 - 🌿 [5 Market Place](#)
 - 🌿 [4 Market Place](#)
 - 🌿 [Billesdon Coplow, Tilton Lane](#)
 - 🌿 [Potters Cottage, 2 Uppingham Road](#)
 - 🌿 [6 and 8 Uppingham Road, Cobblers Cottage, Uppingham Road](#)

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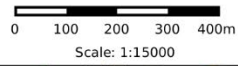
- 🍃 [K6 Kiosk, Rolleston Road](#)
- 🍃 [32 Church Street](#)
- 🍃 [38 Church Street](#)
- 🍃 [42 Church Street](#)
- 🍃 [Pump In garden of 44 Church Street](#)
- 🍃 [The Vicarage and Boundary Wall, 50 Church Street](#)
- 🍃 [Boundary Wall to Churchyard, Church Street](#)
- 🍃 [St Anne's, 7 Leicester Road](#)
- 🍃 [2 Long Lane](#)
- 🍃 [War Memorial, Market Place](#)
- 🍃 [7 Market Place](#)
- 🍃 [Barn at Kates Hill Farm, Rolleston Road](#)
- 🍃 [1 Uppingham Road](#)
- 🍃 [13 Long Lane](#)
- 🍃 [Willow Cottage, 23 Brook Lane](#)
- 🍃 [23 Church Street](#)
- 🍃 [27 Church Street](#)
- 🍃 [The Gables, 6 Church Street](#)
- 🍃 [30 Church Street](#)
- 🍃 [Barn To Rear of Number 38 Church Street](#)
- 🍃 [Church of St John the Baptist, Church Street](#)
- 🍃 [5 Leicester Road](#)
- 🍃 [No. 8 and Boundary Wall, 8 Long Lane](#)
- 🍃 [The Maltings, 12 and 14 Uppingham Road](#)

Billesdon Conservation Area

- 10.13 Conservation Areas are 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Local planning authorities have a general duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas, consequently there are more stringent planning controls and obligations in respect of new development, demolitions, alterations, highway works and advertisements.

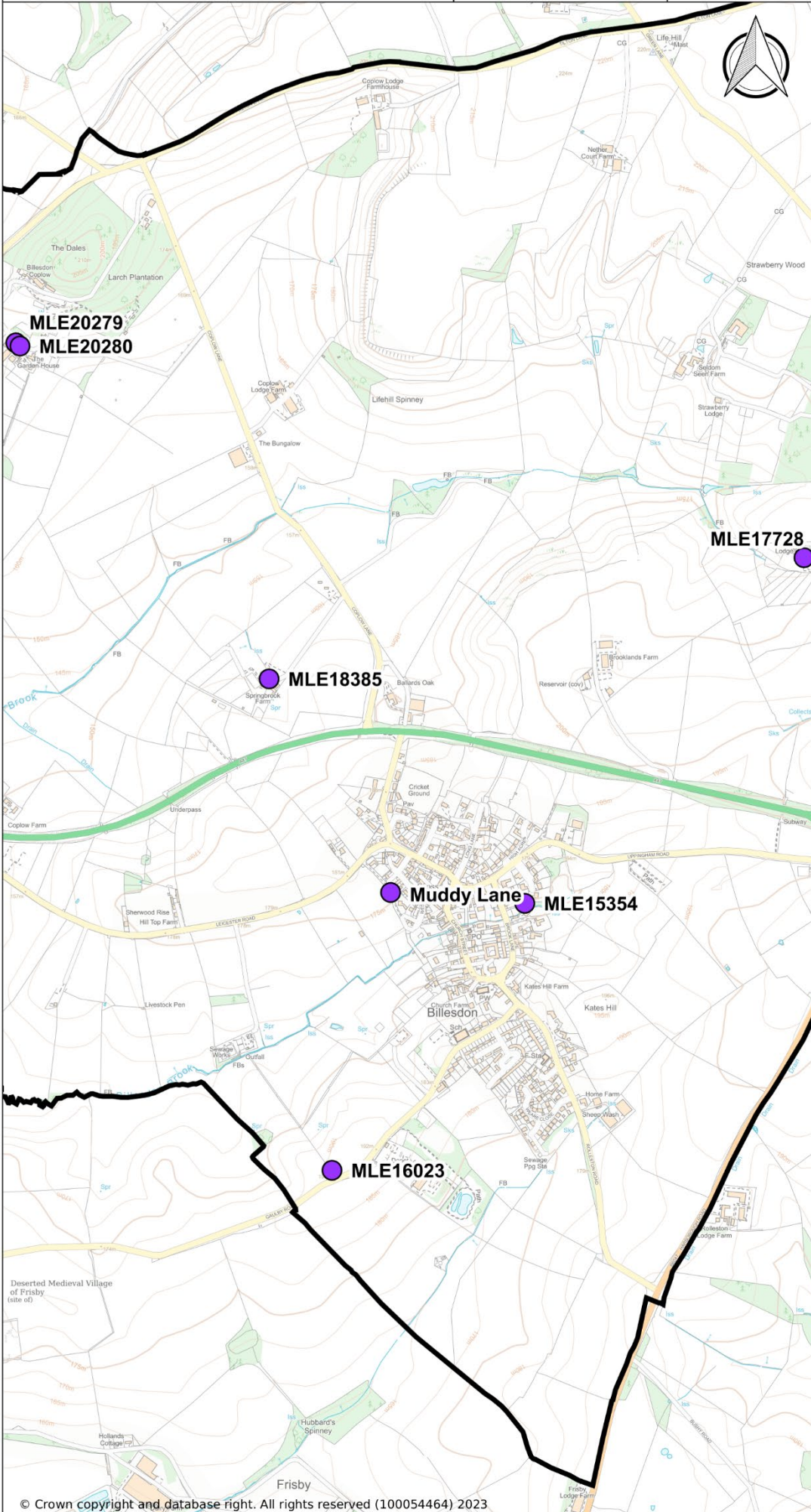


Figure 17: Church of St John the Baptist



Author:

Date: 06/06/2023



Features of Local Heritage Interest



Neighbourhood Area



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- 10.14 [Billesdon Conservation Area](#) is focussed on the village centre, Church Street and Brook Lane.

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- 10.15 The above places (Scheduled Monument, Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) have already been designated and offered protection through national and local planning policies, however there are other buildings and sites in the Neighbourhood Area that make a positive contribution providing local character because of their heritage value. Although such heritage assets may not be nationally designated, they may be offered a level of protection through our Neighbourhood Plan.

Features of Local Heritage Interest

- 10.16 A list of Features of Local Heritage Interest (Maps 8 and Appendix 1) has been compiled to identify those heritage assets which are of local architectural or historic value. This list has been compiled from the following sources:

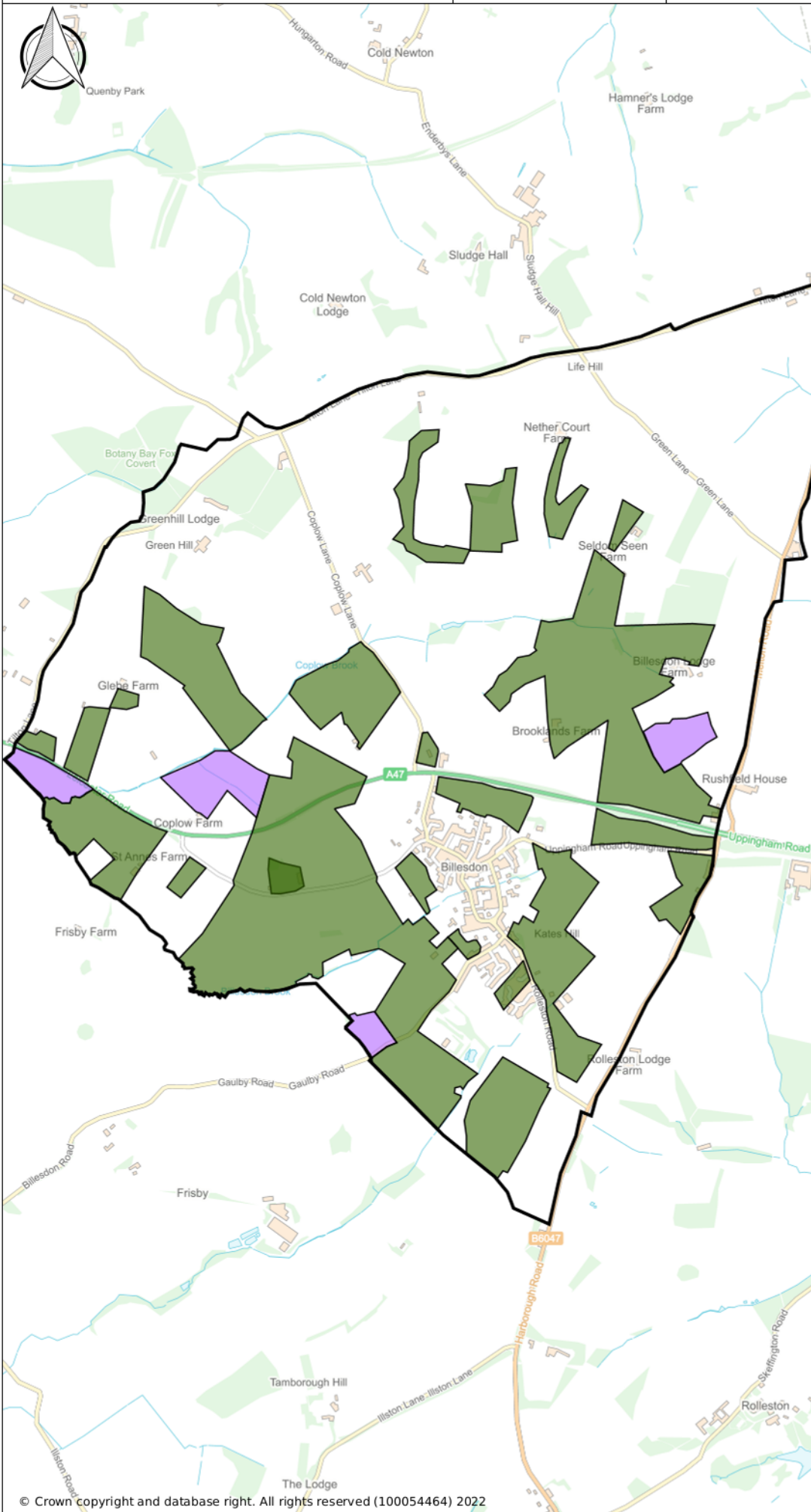
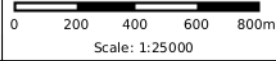
First Billesdon Neighbourhood Plan

- 10.17 Following community consultation, the first Neighbourhood Plan identified two further heritage assets of local importance:
- Muddy Lane was for centuries a 'carriage road', giving access to the rear of properties in Church Street through to the Church. A stretch of it has been preserved as a pleasant walk, rich in flora, and forming a distinctive boundary to the village on its western side;
 - Earthworks at the north end of Long Lane have been mapped and recorded as a probable 'medieval shrunken village'. This is a known archaeological remain recorded on the Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Record (MLE1212 see below).

Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Record

- 10.18 The Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) is the most complete record of Leicestershire and Rutland's known archaeological remains, including historic buildings. The HER identifies six historic buildings in the parish which are not already listed and 27⁴ archaeological remains. The [Heritage Gateway](#) website includes information from the HER.

⁴ One of these is the Medieval village earthworks north of Long Lane previously identified by the First Neighbourhood Plan



Ridge and Furrow (Possible)



Ridge and Furrow



Neighbourhood Area



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Ridge and Furrow

10.19 Ridge and furrow is an archaeological pattern of ridges and troughs created by a system of ploughing used in Europe during the Middle Ages, typical of the open field system. During the 1990s the Monuments Protection Programme investigated survival and loss of medieval and post-medieval agricultural earthworks in the English Midlands. The region was identified as preserving the best surviving examples in Europe. The work was published as 'Turning the Plough' (Hall 2001), and identified 40 parishes where the most significant earthworks were located. In 2011 it was decided to update records of what survives in the 40 parishes. English Heritage took new oblique photographs, allowing the condition of ridge and furrow to be mapped and recorded in detail.



Figure 18: Ridge and Furrow

10.20 Large areas of ridge and furrow remain in and around the Neighbourhood Area. Ridge and furrow sites are non-designated heritage sites of archaeological interest.

Policy BPr19: Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Development proposals that will affect the following locally valued heritage assets or their setting will be assessed having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset:

Features of Local Heritage Interest (Map 8):

MLE15354	Baptist Chapel, Brook Lane
MLE16023	Cold War monitoring post north of Gaulby Road
MLE17728	Billesdon Lodge Farm
MLE18385	Barns at Spring Brook Farm, Coplow Lane
MLE20279	Home Farm
MLE20280	Garden Buildings at Billesdon Coplow Muddy Lane

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Known Archaeological Remains (Map 9):

MLE1212	Medieval village earthworks north of Long Lane
MLE1213	Possible hillfort, Life Hill
MLE1214	Roman site, Life Hill
MLE1215	Roman pottery, south-east of Life Hill
MLE1216	Post-medieval windmill, The Poplars
MLE1217	Medieval/post-medieval windmill south-west of Billesdon
MLE1219	Skeffington Mill
MLE1223	Billesdon Market Place
MLE1224	Possible Anglo-Saxon burial from near Billesdon Coplow
MLE8910	Possible Roman Road, Harborough/Melton Road
MLE8911	Historic settlement core of Billesdon
MLE10226	Medieval village earthworks, High Acres
MLE10227	Billesdon Brickworks
MLE10543	Various finds and undated features at Forge Field
MLE10545	Post-medieval clay pit at Forge Field
MLE16963	Undated feature at 17a-21a, Brook Lane
MLE17004	Billesdon Union Workhouse
MLE17360	Prisoner of War camp, Gaulby Road
MLE20562	Roman site, west of Vicarage Close
MLE20563	Possible Iron Age site south-west of Weare Close
MLE20655	Turnpike Road, Leicester to Peterborough
MLE21879	St John the Baptist's Church burial ground, Church Street
MLE21880	Billesdon Cemetery, Uppingham Road
MLE22450	Medieval/post-medieval mound, Kates Hill
MLE22451	Medieval ridge and furrow earthworks, Kates Hill
MLE25718	Site of Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, West Lane
MLE26267	Medieval hollow way running north from Billesdon

Ridge and Furrow areas (Map 10)

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11. Design

- 11.1 All development should contribute positively to the creation of well-designed buildings and spaces. Through good design the character of our area should be maintained and enhanced with places that work well for both occupants and users and that are built to last.
- 11.2 Harborough Local Plan Policy GD8 helps to address the design objectives set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, but since then the Government has published the National Design Guide.

National Design Guide

- 11.3 The [National Design Guide](#) sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. It forms part of the Government's collection of planning practice guidance and should be read alongside the separate planning practice guidance on design process and tools.
- 11.4 The National Design Guide identifies ten characteristics of well-designed places that together help create its physical character, sense of community and address issues affecting climate.
- 11.5 An understanding of the context, history and the cultural characteristics of a site and its neighbourhood influences the location, siting and design of new developments. It means they are well grounded in their locality and more likely to be acceptable. Development that has a character that suits its context and history makes places that are locally distinctive.



Figure 19: The Green, Billesdon

Billesdon Village Design Statement

- 11.6 The Billesdon Village Design Statement was first prepared in May 2001. Since then, it has been updated and incorporated into the Neighbourhood Plan. The Billesdon Village Design Statement encourages and promotes high quality,

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sustainable design, including, where appropriate, innovative and contemporary approaches to new development, which positively respond to local character and context. The Statement is included in the Neighbourhood Plan as Appendix 1 and can also be used to ensure that new development satisfies the requirements set out within the National Planning Policy Framework, National Design Guide and the Harborough Local Plan.

Policy BPr20: Design

Only development that reflects the Billesdon Village Design Statement (Appendix 1) will be supported. Development should also:

- a. show appropriate regard for the amenities of neighbouring properties including daylight/sunlight, privacy, air quality, noise and light pollution;
- b. appropriate provision for the storage of waste and recyclable material in locations convenient and accessible for collection and emptying; and
- c. provide a safe and suitable access.

Climate Change

- 11.7 The fate of future generations depends on our ability to take radical action to deal with climate change. The global impacts of increased temperatures and severe weather are stark and intensifying, and will have major negative impacts on communities across the UK. From flooding to heat waves, our society will be increasingly defined by our ability to get control of carbon dioxide emissions and build our resilience. We have known about the science of climate change for more than quarter of century, but action has been far too slow.
- 11.8 Many of the adverse impacts of climate change, such as extreme heat, flooding or water scarcity, will result in costs to local businesses and householders, and solutions to the problems they pose need to be developed locally. Adaptation to the risks presented by climate change is key to future-proofing Billesdon and making sure that new developments maintain and enhance the health and wellbeing of our local community, as well as its competitiveness.
- 11.9 Our Neighbourhood Plan plays a role in helping secure reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change, and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy.

Low Carbon Energy Design

- 11.10 The UK has a legal target to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.
- 11.11 The planning system is a key lever for carbon reduction in new buildings, refurbished and retrofitted buildings, so our Neighbourhood Plan supports the

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transition to a low carbon future. Ultimately, all buildings in Billesdon will need to operate at or near to carbon neutral standards if Climate Emergency targets are to be achieved. New developments provide opportunities to minimise the carbon impact of buildings and design them to meet the standards of a net zero carbon future. Any development that fails to achieve these standards risks becoming a carbon liability that will require remedial action and further investment in the future.

- 11.12 New and existing homes make up about 20% of current emissions. The Future Homes and Buildings Standard is a set of standards that will ensure new homes built from 2025 will produce 75-80% less carbon emissions than homes delivered under current regulations. The Future Homes Standard will be implemented through changes to building regulations. On 15 December 2021, the Government announced changes to the Building Regulations to help the UK deliver this. Under the new regulations, CO2 emissions from new build homes must be around 30% lower than current standards. The updated Building Regulations include amendments to Approved Documents - Part F (Ventilation) and Part L (Conservation of fuel and power), and the release of a new Approved Document for Overheating (Part O). The new building regulations will come into force for all Building Regulation applications made on or after 15 June 2022.
- 11.13 While our Neighbourhood Plans cannot set any additional local technical standards or requirements relating to the construction, internal layout or performance of new dwellings, we can encourage new development to exceed current standards.

Policy BPr21: Climate Change

All development proposals will be expected to mitigate against and adapt to climate change and to comply with national targets on reducing carbon emissions and energy. Development, including refurbishment where it requires planning permission, will be expected to take account of the following:

- a. how it makes effective use of sustainably sourced resources and materials, minimises waste, and water use;
- b. how it is located, laid out, sited and designed to withstand the long and short term impacts of climate change, particularly the effect of rising temperatures, sustained periods of high temperatures and periods of intense rain and storms;
- c. how it is located laid out, sited and designed to promote the use of sustainable modes of transport and minimises car usage, connecting people to where they want and need to go through attractive, efficient and convenient walking, cycling and public transport networks;

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- d. that the building form and its construction allows for adaptation to future changes in climate;
- e. that the building form and its construction permits further reduction in the building's carbon footprint, where feasible and viable; and
- f. that in addressing the above measures, the development's design and layout also strives to maximise health and well-being and enjoyment of its residents and net gains in biodiversity, where all possible.

Developments are encouraged to exceed current Building Regulations standards regarding the energy efficiency of new buildings.

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Appendix 1: Features of Local Heritage Interest

<p>Baptist Chapel, Brook Lane</p>	<p>MLE15354 The General Baptist Chapel was built in 1812. It has a three-bay front with segmental-arched windows. It has an associated burial ground.</p>	
<p>Cold War monitoring post north of Gaulby Road</p>	<p>MLE16023 Underground Royal Observer Corps Monitoring Post. Opened in 1959 and closed in 1968.</p>	
<p>Billesdon Lodge Farm</p>	<p>MLE17728 Three C19th barns and a 1970s farmhouse. The barns comprise a building now used as the kitchen of the house, a 3-bay barn that appears to have originally been a threshing barn (large barn door opening on its east elevation) and a 2-storey brick barn.</p>	

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<p>Barns at Spring Brook Farm, Coplow Lane</p>	<p>MLE18385 Three adjoining barns were surveyed in 2008. There were two brick barns and one timber/corrugated iron structure incorporating a piece of cob walling.</p>	
<p>Home Farm</p>	<p>MLE20279 The U-shaped stable block of this farm range is likely to be the earliest element. The farm buildings are situated c.200m to the south of the main house associated with the Billesdon Coplow estate.</p>	
<p>Garden Buildings at Billesdon Coplow</p>	<p>MLE20280 Garden house and associated buildings situated adjacent to a walled garden and associated with the Billesdon Coplow estate.</p>	

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<p>Muddy Lane</p>	<p>Muddy Lane was for centuries a 'carriage road', giving access to the rear of properties in Church Street through to the Church. A stretch of it has been preserved as a pleasant walk, rich in flora, and forming a distinctive boundary to the village on its western side</p>	
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Appendix 2: Village Design Statement

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Introduction

The Billesdon Village Design Statement was first prepared in May 2001. In 2013, the Statement was updated and integrated into the Billesdon Neighbourhood Plan.

The objectives of this Village Design Statement are to describe the distinctive character of the village as it is today and to highlight the qualities that the residents value. From these qualities design principles based on the distinctive local character of the settlement have been drawn up to guide future development and maintenance.

Who is the Village Design Statement for?

Group	Individuals	Purpose
<i>Developers</i>	Architects, Designers, Engineers	Describes the visual qualities and character of the village to inspire new designs, and incorporate the views of villagers in developments and alterations, which may shorten negotiations and planning applications
<i>Residents</i>	Homeowners, Tenants	Guidance in alteration, maintenance work and new build
<i>Local Government and Statutory Consultees</i>	Harborough District Council, Leicestershire County Council, Billesdon Parish Council	It can be used as guidance in considering the design of new developments, & can strengthen the local authority's position when negotiating on design & at appeal.
<i>Local Businesses</i>	Retailers, Employers, Services	Understand local needs & facilities
<i>Community Groups</i>	Charities, Recreation, Social	Appreciate facilities available and future requirements of community

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How is the Village Design Statement to be used?

The Village Design Statement should be consulted when preparing designs for new developments, renovations, extensions or alterations to existing buildings in the village regardless of scale.

The relationship between the site and its surrounding should be carefully considered



The Village Design Statement is intended to encourage and stimulate the following design process:

1. A survey of the relationship between the site and its surroundings, working with and respecting what is already there.
2. The identification of design opportunities presented by existing views, landscaping, built form, materials and details.
3. The designers should demonstrate in their proposals that an analysis of the site details and wider contextual setting has been carried out.

The Village Design Statement does not aim to provide design solutions. Its purpose is to illustrate the distinctive elements and characteristics of the village that should be considered by developers when designing new buildings or altering existing buildings.

History

Like many English villages, Billesdon's origins were ancient but few traces remain. Following Iron Age and Roman occupation of the hilly land around Life Hill to the north of the parish, the Anglo-Saxons moved down into the nearby valley watered by Billesdon and Coplow Brooks. The new settlement developed into a classic open field village, with communal cultivation of land in three open fields – Portbridge, Mill and Stonepitt. Repeated ploughing of the strips by teams of oxen created the ridge and furrow pattern that is so characteristic of the parish today, and animals grazed on common land near the Coplow.

Billesdon is unmistakably a rural community



Billesdon is unmistakably a rural community and in the mid-19th century was a busy and prosperous place with a population of around 1000 at its peak in 1861.

The village economy was boosted by regular coach services, the White Hart coaching inn and employment for several farriers and blacksmiths. Agriculture, especially stock-rearing, occupied most people, but framework knitting flourished around Bradley's Square and several brickworks, including a sizeable one on the eastern edge of the village, produced distinctive 'Billesdon Bricks'. The full range of basic needs was met by bakers, butchers, grocers, shoemakers, tailors, milliners, dressmakers, carpenters and bricklayers. There were also one or two more specialist trades, including the world famous taxidermist Thomas Potter. Following Lord Suffield's construction of lavish stables and kennels around the Quadrant in 1838, the Billesdon (later the Fernie) Hunt was periodically resident in the village, giving employment to assorted huntsmen, grooms, smiths, livery tailors and domestic servants.

Other reminders of Billesdon's past include the Cricket Club, founded in 1872 at the ground off Coplow Lane; the Women's Institute, constituted in 1917; and its offshoot in 1920, the Drama Society – all still going strong. No longer with us are the Village Hall, built in 1870 by the Ancient Order of Foresters to a design by the distinguished Leicester architect Mr Goddard and sadly demolished 125 years later; the celebrations of Feast Week in June, the annual Flower Show and Sports Meeting (including horse racing around the cricket field) in August, and the Village

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Pageant; and organisations like the Sick and Divi Club and the Tennis Club. Much changed but recognisable on close examination is the Prisoner of War Camp and the Royal Observer Corps post on opposite sides of Gaulby Road. Both are important reminders that Billesdon, like all communities, played its part during the World Wars of the 20th century.

DESIGN STATEMENTS

1. Setting within the Landscape

Design Guidelines

- 1.1 One of Billesdon's endearing features is its secluded valley setting, almost invisible from all the approaching roads and the A47 bypass. Development that encroaches above the ridgeline could compromise this feature and should be avoided.
- 1.2 The wooded-valley appearance of the village should be maintained and enhanced by the planting of additional appropriate native broadleaf species both within the village and along the approach roads.
- 1.3 Any proposals for prominently-located telecommunication equipment, mobile phone masts, wind turbines and other high-level equipment such as high voltage power lines, could have a significant negative impact on the surrounding landscape. Very careful consideration should be given to the siting of any such equipment and its subsequent removal when redundant.

2. Shape of the Settlement

Billesdon village today has developed around a central core enclosed by Church Street and Brook Lane, although the original village probably existed nearer Long Lane. The remains of the medieval village lie adjacent to the cricket field off Coplow Lane and behind High Acres. The restored Market Place lies at the north end of Church Street at its junction with the Uppingham Road. The existence of the Market Place with its war memorial and medieval cross is indicative of the former central importance of Billesdon within the surrounding countryside. The Market Place, with its enclosing buildings, makes this an important focal point in the village.



Brook Lane forms part of the central core of the village

To the south, at the opposite end of Church Street, sits the Parish Church of St John the Baptist, its spire clearly visible from the approach to the village. The church and its grounds form another focal point within the village. The Manor House, in ironstone with a Swithland slate roof, closes the view opposite the church. The tree and small green in front of the Manor House form one of the few open spaces within the village.

The total group of church, Old School, Old Vicarage with associated walls and churchyard, and listed mud barn (now converted to residential use), comprise an especially significant group of buildings and open spaces, which impart a special character to this part of the village. Billesdon is notable for its diversity of building styles and variety of materials used, including stone, brick and mud.

The majority of Billesdon is designated a Conservation Area, to which policy CS11 (Promoting Design and Built Heritage) of the *Harborough Core Strategy* applies. Many of the older houses

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were built during the transition from stone to brick and there are many fine examples of both. Some buildings retain timber frame construction, much of which is obscured. Roofing materials are of thatch and traditional Welsh or Swithland slate, although a number of houses in Church Street contain fine examples of crucks, the Old Bakehouse for example. Historically many stone/brick built houses were constructed along the west side of Church Street. The 17th century Manor House, with its extensive hunt kennels and stables built to the rear around 1840, were of central importance to the area between Church Street and Brook Lane. The stables, now known as The Quadrant, were converted into houses in the 1980s.

Church Street contains a wide range of styles



A row of nine terraced cottages built in the 19th century for hunt servants on Brook Lane is known as Suffield Terrace. More recent development has taken place along Church Street and Brook Lane during the 20th century, culminating in modern-style houses and bungalows being built during the 1970s along the east side of Church Street and in the 2001 Weare Close development of 44 houses. The Weare Close development fails to conform to the requirements of the

Village Design Statement and any repetition of this must be avoided and permission refused. Further infill developments have taken place throughout the village in recent years with a range of styles in evidence. Development has also taken place along the village approaches. The Workhouse on Leicester Road was demolished in the mid 1930s and the recovered bricks were used to build the row of semi-detached houses on The Bank. Rolleston Road leads southwards out of the village past a Local Authority housing estate, the village fire station, some private houses and the Weare Close development. Gaulby Road, running westwards, has been developed on the south side with a small ribbon of houses built during the 1960s and 1970s. Uppingham Road, leading east out of the village, has also been subject to development, with houses built along High Acres during the 1960s and 1970s. Large executive homes were built at the Poplars during the early 1990s.

Varied frontings co-exist happily along Church Street



The most recent large-scale developments (including White Hart Close and Weare Close) have taken place during the late 1990s and early 2000s and were planned before the introduction of the Village Design Statement. These developments have been mixed and remain somewhat out of character with the main village. Others have been more suburban in character, again, not in keeping with the traditional core of the village. Conversely, some newer buildings have attempted to reflect more traditional building styles, or have incorporated some interesting features, but not always successfully.

Essential Characteristics

Billesdon is a compact settlement along and within the circular road route of Church Street, Brook Lane and Uppingham Road. Together with this are various roads leading from the circular route, such as Long Lane and West Lane. There are also the alleyways and lanes, such as those to the Baptist Chapel off Brook Lane and to the Quadrant off Church Street. Since the opening of the bypass in 1986, the former through route of Uppingham Road (which has some ribbon development and modern closes of executive homes, converging on the Market Place) has become an ordinary village road comparable with Church Street.

The buildings fronting all of these roads are varied in age, design and materials. Ironstone and brick intermingle, but there is no excessive size or massing to traditional buildings. The traditional width of buildings is approximately 5 metres. This does not result in excessive massing of the roof line.

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A continuous road frontage of individual buildings, many with small plots to the front, is typical as in Church Street. This slight setting back of the houses places emphasis on the walls. These are stone, brick or mud, with a variety of copings.

The modest form of the buildings reflects cottages of only one and a half storeys. Two- or even three-storey buildings are still restrained in massing. A two-storey modern building can be as high as a traditional three-storey dwelling. The greater width of many modern homes results in a much greater massing that can sit uncomfortably among the older traditional buildings.

Design Guidelines

- 2.1 Where appropriate, developments that follow the street line should be encouraged; closes and cul-de-sacs should be avoided where possible. Three-storey dwellings should also be avoided.
- 2.2 Modern developments have not always integrated with the village. Planning applications should provide an analysis of the site and its wider context, either in the form of a short written statement, and/or through the use of photographs of the site and its surroundings.
- 2.3 Existing open spaces and gaps between buildings should be preserved. Specifically views of the Church, open farmland, the Market Place and the green adjacent to the Manor House are vistas that should be protected.
- 2.4 Views of the village from the approaches generally give a positive first impression. Any new building should respect these approaches, be of sympathetic design, and sit comfortably within its surroundings.

3. Buildings

Billesdon has a wide and diverse range of domestic and commercial buildings reflecting the history and development of the village. Buildings vary in size and material. There are a few significant three-storey buildings within the village centre, but the majority are of two-storey construction.

The village has the benefit of a well-defined Conservation Area at its heart, where many of the oldest buildings are to be found. There are fine examples of cruck-built cottages, thatched cottages and mud or cob walls. Roof materials are thatch or traditional Welsh or Swithland slate, and walls of red brick or local ironstone. Features found in this area have been replicated in the surrounding streets as the village has developed over time.

These aspects of design, and the construction materials used, are to be encouraged in any future development within or around the village. Examples of these preferred design features are illustrated in the following paragraphs that highlight the recurring design themes that emerge from the Conservation Area within Billesdon.



The use of more traditional rural materials is to be encouraged

Roofs and Chimneys

The use of slate and thatch should be encouraged to reflect the roof types in the immediate vicinity of the development (Figs 1, 2, 3, pp. 44-5). The use of dark red clay tiles may also be appropriate in certain locations. Attention should also be paid to the types of chimney as part of the overall design of the building; the use of appropriate styles of chimney pot should be encouraged (Figs 4, 5, 6). These should reflect the styles generally found within a rural village and Billesdon in particular.

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Rainwater Features

Gutters and downpipes are important features. Inappropriate styles or colours can adversely affect the appearance of buildings. Modern materials are acceptable for these items but dark colours (preferably black) are considered more appropriate. The use of white and other bright colours should be discouraged.

Dormer Windows

Dormer windows can dramatically influence the character of a building. Within Billesdon, dormer window design is generally of a type that has a pitched roof and sits close to the eaves, with the bottom of the window interrupting the guttering. Where dormer windows are being considered as a part of a new development or a loft conversion, adherence to the preferred design features (ridged and hipped) should be encouraged (Figs 7 & 8).

Window styles are encouraged to be sympathetic



Windows

A predominant window design is multi-paned sash or casement. Whilst traditional materials are encouraged, sensible and sympathetic use of modern materials is considered acceptable, provided the window design reflects that of properties in the immediate vicinity. Examples of preferred window designs are illustrated in Figs 9 and 10. Note should be taken of the brick details over the window and the sill design and materials.

Doors and Porches

The majority of doors are set into the building with only a small rebate. Doors are predominantly of a solid type with, occasionally, a fanlight set above. Adjoining glass panels are inappropriate and should generally be discouraged. The majority of porches in the village consist of a single canopy. Such designs are considered appropriate (Fig 11). Porches having a pitched roof should be designed to reflect and mimic the main roof construction (Fig 12).

The use of these design features, together with, as far as possible, the use of traditional materials (although modern materials are acceptable if used sympathetically outside the Conservation Area) will be encouraged, subject to compatibility with the building and adjacent properties.

Building Materials

The predominant building material within the village is red/orange brick. Whilst several properties are built of stone, some specific examples have mud ("cob") or rendered walls. The use of bricks and mortar and rendering materials that match with buildings in the immediate vicinity should be expected, as will the use of matching brick bonds and features. Flemish Bond is a common feature that should be encouraged (Fig 13).

The finishing of gables and eaves should be in keeping with the design aspects of the village (Fig 14); the use of bargeboards on gable ends is incongruous to the settlement and should be discouraged. The preferred feature is brick relief design (cornicing in Fig 15) that has been used extensively on new and old properties alike.

The closeness of the buildings, the mixture of building materials and the juxtaposition of cottages and larger houses and farmhouses give Billesdon its particular character. The irregular positioning of the buildings, with some set directly onto the streets and others with gardens in front or set sideways on, all adds interest and character to the village.

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Most properties within the village have been maintained to reflect their origins, with the retention of existing or sympathetic replacement of windows and doors.

This attention to the environmental impact of building maintenance and sympathetic construction of new in-fill developments has enabled the village to retain its particular character.

Design Guidelines

- 3.1 New developments will be required to be sympathetic with their surroundings in respect of scale, design, siting and materials, unlike the Weare Close development, which was agreed before this Village Design Statement was adopted.
- 3.2 Building materials should be in keeping with the existing materials in the vicinity of the site. Brick size and colour, mortar colour, and roof materials will all be features to be considered.
- 3.3 Wall cladding is not a traditional feature of the village and will be discouraged.
- 3.4 Windows and doors made of traditional materials will be encouraged, although modern materials will be acceptable provided that the door and window designs reflect those on the properties in the immediate vicinity. Windows should be of a multi-pane design and doors solid, without an insert window.
- 3.5 Any new properties must be designed to fit sympathetically with the buildings in the immediate vicinity and to respect the local character.
- 3.6 Roofs of future developments should follow the example of the past: i.e. pitched and gabled with traditional Welsh slates, satisfactory alternative or, where appropriate, dark red clay tile.
- 3.7 Chimneys will be required on new developments. Wherever possible, chimneys should be incorporated into gable end walls with details similar to those of older dwellings.
- 3.8 Care should be taken when extending older properties, and when building new developments within the Conservation Area, to maintain the proportions of walls to windows and doors, as found in older style cottages. Larger windows do not fit in alongside original small windows. Thought should be given to materials used for replacement windows and doors so that they blend with the general appearance of the locality.
- 3.9 New developments should avoid featureless and windowless walls on buildings in prominent locations. Suitable traditional details should be incorporated, e.g. the use of windows, false windows or blue bricks to form a pattern, where this does not adversely affect the amenity of adjoining residents.
- 3.10 Any housing developments on the edge of the village should be incorporated into the village as far as possible, linked by footpaths, so that they do not become self-contained and/or inward-looking.
- 3.11 Developments should avoid 'Standardised Designs'; individual and traditional styles that capture the distinctiveness of the village and reflect the building features found within Billesdon will be encouraged.
- 3.12 Garages should be unobtrusive and not a prominent feature of the design.



Hedges feature throughout Billesdon

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4. Boundaries

One of the most notable characteristics of many Billesdon properties is a frontage abutting directly on to the road. Church Street, Brook Lane, West Lane and Leicester Road are examples of this. Many have no front gardens and those that do exist tend to be very small. Areas of the village developed since the 1940s, such as High Acres, The Poplars and Gaulby Road, have larger front gardens, so that houses are further from the highway. Many of these later developments have minimal, if any, walls or fencing marking their boundaries. Council-built properties around Glebe Close and Vicarage Close tend to have boundaries that are more substantial, such as hedging. Most boundaries in the centre of the village were built to keep out driven livestock. These utilitarian walls are fairly plain, strong and normally built to shoulder height.

Materials that have been used include mud (as seen around the Old Vicarage and the Manor House), local ironstone and red brick or a mixture of these. They tend to have a blue brick or tile coping often with a tile crease immediately beneath it. All these types of boundary treatment are considered acceptable. Standardised wooden fencing is often unsympathetic to its surroundings and should be avoided in front gardens.

The landscape around the village boundaries is characterised by hawthorn hedges, some of which have never been laid. Muddy Lane, Rolleston Road and Gaulby Road near to the Council Depot show good examples.

Street furniture should be in keeping with the surroundings



Design Guidelines

- 4.1 Traditional boundaries should be preserved wherever possible and new developments should aim to retain existing walls or hedges.
- 4.2 Where hedging is planted, repaired or replaced, it should be with native species that are common within the area and if possible of local stock.
- 4.3 New planting of native hedging is to be encouraged in new developments as a form of boundary treatment to properties.
- 4.4 The style, height and materials used in new boundaries should be in keeping with the property itself and its immediate neighbours, i.e. designed to harmonise with its surroundings, rather than stand out as a landmark.
- 4.5 Wherever possible walls should be of red brick and/or ironstone with blue brick or ridge tile coping incorporating a tile crease beneath it.
- 4.6 Gardens open to the highway are not appropriate and new developments should incorporate enclosed boundaries to reflect this.
- 4.7 Walls should carry forward the heritage of a working village, i.e. finished with no unnecessary decorative treatment.

5. Street Furniture

Billesdon is relatively uncluttered by street furniture, although installations over the years have varied in quality. Traditional designs are preferred. The quantity of street furniture should be kept to a minimum according to needs whilst maintaining quality.

Good examples of recent installations include seating, the village notice board and a litter bin, all of which can be seen on the village green. The nearby bus shelters have also recently been installed and are constructed of wood, to blend in with the street scene.

Design Guidelines

- 5.1 Care should be taken to preserve the rural nature of the village; street furniture should be carefully located, of good quality, traditional in design and in keeping with the character of the village.

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Lighting

Lighting installations within the Conservation Area have been mainly of decorative ironwork design, either wall mounted or freestanding giving out soft yellow low-level light.

More modern lamp styles have been introduced. However, to avoid urbanisation it would be preferred if traditional styles were to be used. An example is the traditional-style lamp outside the Old School, which recently replaced a more utilitarian lamppost.

Design Guidelines

- 5.1.2 Older ironwork lighting columns/fittings should be preserved where possible and it is preferable that replacement or new lighting match these designs.
- 5.1.3 Street lighting for new developments will be encouraged to be of a design that is in keeping with the rural character of the village
- 5.1.4 To minimise the effects of light pollution softer yellow lighting is preferred where this does not compromise personal safety.
- 5.1.5 Private security lighting should be carefully sited to illuminate the required area, whilst minimising light pollution and any nuisance to road users or adjacent properties.

Signs

Examples of both modern and traditional road signs can be seen in Billesdon. Use of modern sheet metal road signage with broad painted borders can detract from the rural character of the village. Plain black and white signage without a border has less impact yet, with modern reflective materials, can remain safe and visible when required.



Signs should be in keeping with the surroundings

Design Guidelines

- 5.2.1 All signage should be kept to a minimum. Redundant signs should be removed and every effort made to avoid duplicate signage.
- 5.2.2 Where they remain legal, older traditional signs need preserving and should not be replaced by modern equivalents. Where this is not possible, replacement or new signs should be of older traditional designs with black lettering on white background. Mounting these on walls or buildings avoids clutter at street level and does not impede the safe passage of pedestrians or vehicle forward-visibility.
- 5.2.3 Internally illuminated signs of any type are unacceptable.
- 5.2.4 Advertising signs should be unobtrusive and generally fixed flat to the appropriate building. Free standing advertising signs should be discouraged and hoardings are unacceptable.

Public Utilities

An increasing number of overhead cables and wires festoon many of the streets and spoil the visual quality of the village. Recently installed telegraph poles are often of metal construction. The statutory bodies for utilities are to be encouraged to seek alternative solutions, e.g. laying cables underground. There is concern that future TV cable layers could leave pavements and roads badly patched, and place junction boxes in inappropriate locations, spoiling the street line.

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Design Guidelines

- 5.3.1 Public utilities should be made aware of their duty to respect the heritage of the village.
- 5.3.2 Installation of new electrical and telegraph poles should be avoided if possible. If unavoidable, wood rather than galvanised steel is preferred. Routing of future cabling underground should be encouraged when appropriate.
- 5.3.3 Television/communication systems cables should, wherever possible, be installed below ground level, with the minimum number of junction boxes carefully sited.

Public open space is scarce in Billesdon



6. Public Rights of Way

Billesdon has a substantial network of rights of way, including footpaths and bridleways, providing access to the countryside. All of these are in the process of being improved.

There are two principal footpaths going north: one to Billesdon Coplow and one towards Sludge Hall. A bridleway links the village to Green Lane and continues as a footpath towards Tilton-on-the-Hill. To the south is a further footpath, leading to Frisby; another footpath joins a bridleway leading from Gaulby Road to Ashlands

on the Ilston-on-the-Hill border. To the south-east, another footpath leads to the Skeffington to Rolleston Road, intersecting it at Skeffington Vale. There are also similar rights of way within the village confines.

Design Guidelines

- 6.1 Footpaths and bridleways should be kept open, in (legally defined) good repair and free of obstruction, with their distinctive character maintained.
- 6.2 Any new developments should be encouraged to incorporate footpaths giving access to the countryside and the remainder of the village, provided that they form safe routes for public use.
- 6.3 Proposals to clear any rights of way are likely to be strongly resisted, depending on circumstances.
- 6.4 Wherever possible, public rights of way should be retained along existing routes. Proposed diversions should be carefully scrutinised and considered on their merits.

7. Open Spaces

There are few significant public open spaces in Billesdon. They include the Market Place, the triangular road junction adjacent to the church, the tiny public garden by the chapel, the 'oval' in Vicarage Close, the wildlife pond and surrounds and the sweep of Leicester Road at its junction with Coplow Lane. The grounds of the church and the chapel and the school playing fields are also vital amenities. The last of these, on the edge of the village, contains the only official children's play area. Because public open space is so scarce, the spaces created between buildings, and in particular private gardens, are vital to the character of the village. Glimpses of rising countryside give the village its relatively enclosed feel.

The Wildlife Pool and spinney off Gaulby Road, adjacent to the Council Depot, are important public amenities and should be protected.

Open plan gardens, in the White Hart Close and Weare Close developments, are not a traditional feature of Billesdon and represent an import from suburban design. They create a form of open space that is inappropriate to the overall feel of the village.

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Design Guidelines

- 7.1 The treatment of space between buildings is of considerable importance to the village design and should be considered at the initial design stages. The design of open spaces should reflect a rural, rather than suburban, character and every opportunity should be taken to enhance their ecological potential.
- 7.2 Open spaces and important views, including important sight lines within the village, should be preserved as they contribute to the setting and character of this settlement.

8. Trees

The county of Leicestershire has a relatively low density of woodland. Billesdon has few mature trees within the village, notably the limes in the Market Place and near the Old School, but several of the roads are lined with ash and occasional oaks. Apart from the Cemetery, most large trees are in private gardens. Viewed from the high fields surrounding the village, the buildings seem to be hidden beneath a canopy of large trees.

The contrast between well-wooded roads, such as Brook Lane, and others, such as West Lane, The Poplars and Vicarage Close, is stark. In Brook Lane, for instance, trees soften widely divergent architectural styles.

Trees soften hard architecture, create contrast, encourage wildlife, reduce extremes of climate and have been shown to benefit both physical and mental health. They also enhance the overall character of the area.

Design Guidelines

- 8.1 Existing trees and shrubs should be retained where possible and integrated into new developments.
- 8.2 New development should include landscaping proposals at the initial design stage, including provisions for native trees and hedge planting and the incorporation of existing mature trees.
- 8.3 Appropriate maintenance of existing trees, shrubs and hedges within the village should be encouraged.
- 8.4 Mature trees and hedgerows should be preserved or replaced within the village boundaries, along all the access roads to Billesdon and in the immediate surrounding countryside.

9. Referenced Illustrations of Styles

The illustrations below are referenced throughout the Village Design Statement

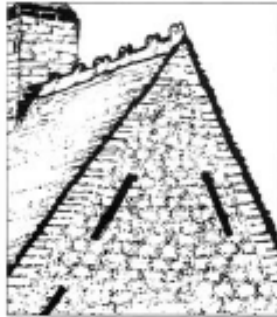


Fig 1

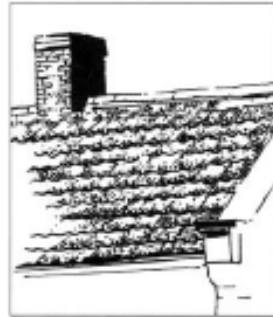


Fig 2

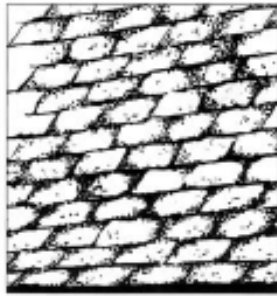


Fig 3



Fig 4

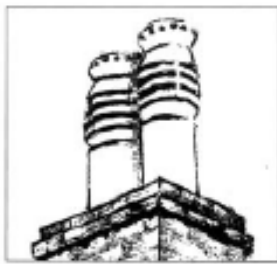


Fig 5

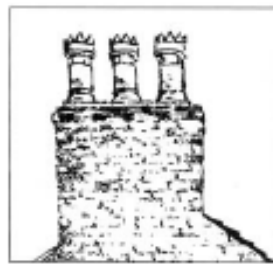


Fig 6



Fig 7



Fig 8

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Fig 9



Fig 10



Fig 11



Fig 12

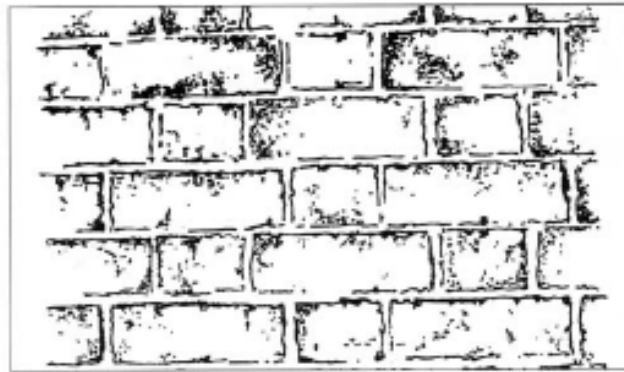


Fig 13

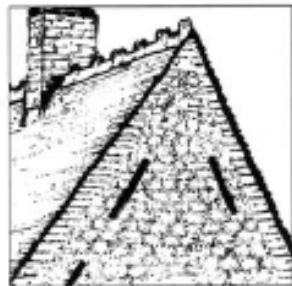


Fig 14

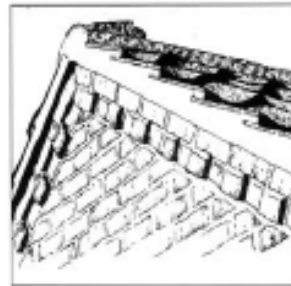


Fig 15



Wildlife Corridor

Former Highway Depot

Housing Commitments (10+)

Features of Local Heritage Interest

Historic Local Wildlife Site (watercourse, hedgerow)

Local Wildlife Site (pond, tree)

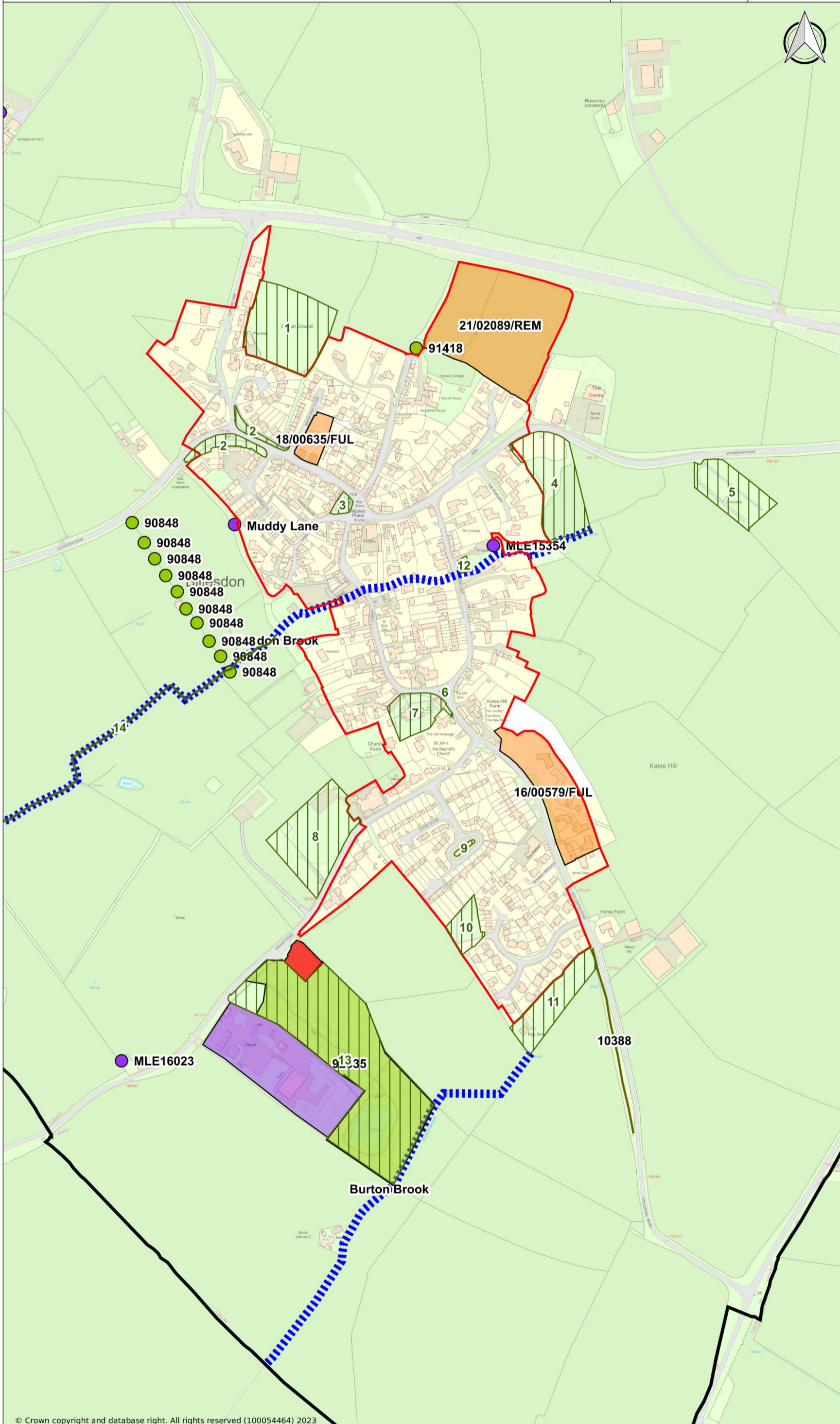
Local Wildlife Site

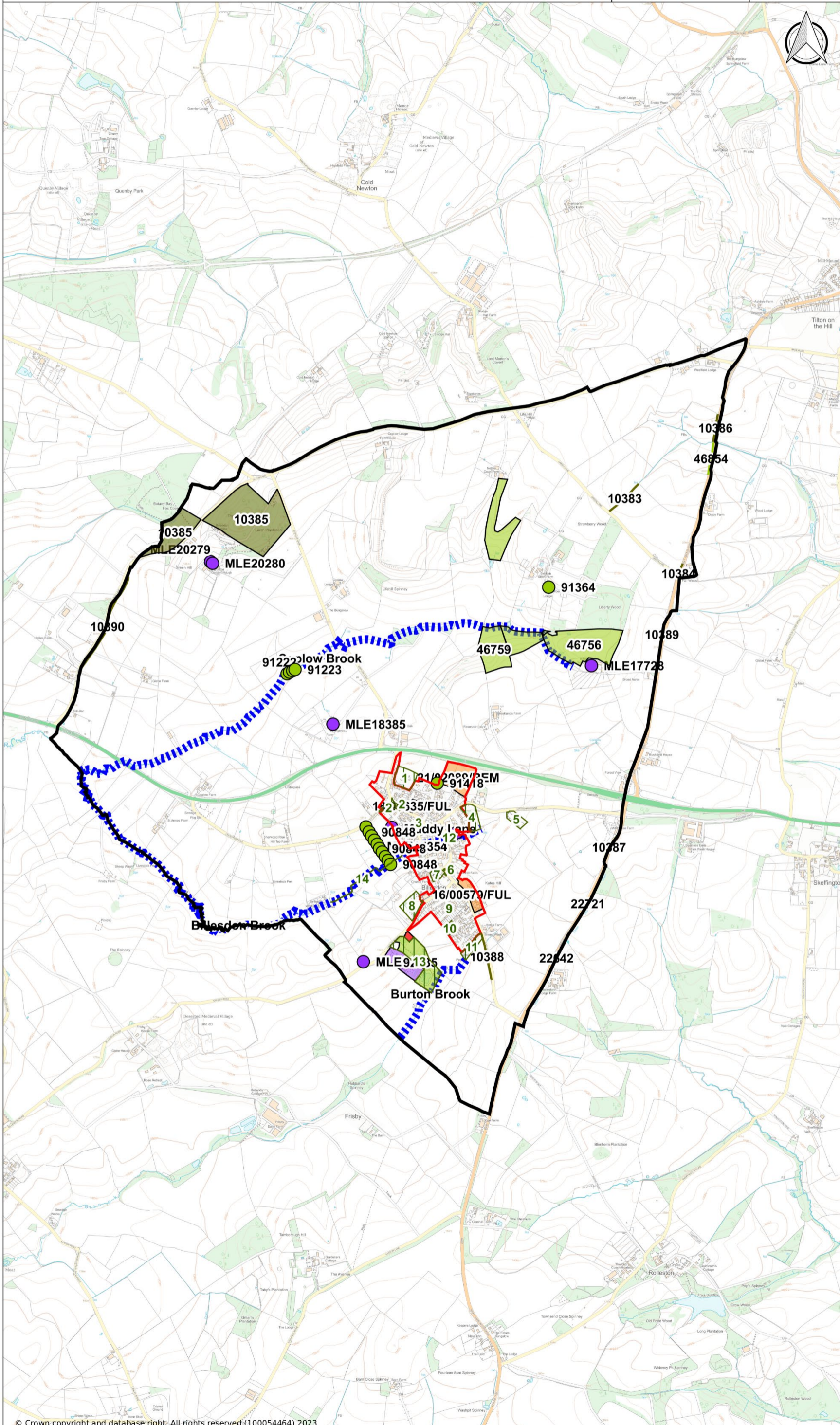
Limits to Development

Housing Allocation

Local Green Space

Neighbourhood Area





- Wildlife Corridor**
- Former Highway Depot**
- Housing Commitments (10+)**
- Features of Local Heritage Interest**
- Historic Local Wildlife Site (watercourse, hedgerow)**
- Historic Local Wildlife Site**
- Local Wildlife Site (hedgerow, watercourse)**
- Local Wildlife Site (pond, tree)**
- Local Wildlife Site**
- Limits to Development**
- Housing Allocation**
- Local Green Space**
- Neighbourhood Area**