



MEPPERSHALL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

**2021 to 2035 – Draft Neighbourhood
Plan Sept 2021**

#LoveMeppershall

John Byng, Traveller and author of The Torrington Diaries, 1797 who describes his first impressions of Meppershall.

“....but placed in a dismal country upon a wretched soil, in a starving village, with roads nearly impassable: (nothing but force could set me down in such a place). “

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Foreword

The first 'Village Plan' for Meppershall was written by a group of dedicated volunteers in 2008. This document proved to be a resource for villagers and planners to better understand residents' views about their community. In 2014, the Parish Council resolved to update the Meppershall Village Plan and set up The Village Plan Review Group to arrange for residents and stakeholders to have a say about various aspects of village life. A small group of volunteers came forward and their first step in consultation was to set up a Facebook page called the Meppershall Village Forum, now known and used as The Meppershall Noticeboard. This was followed by further consultation, live at the Summer Fair and via questionnaires. The updated Village Plan was published March 2017 to form a reference point for the Parish Council during its discussions, and to be used by the various Working Groups in informing recommendations for policy and specific responses. It was passed to Central Bedfordshire Council as an input to their Local Plan and is a key input to this statutory Neighbourhood Plan.

Meppershall Parish Council recognises that the parish has to provide its share of additional housing, given that growth is necessary across the whole of the Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) area. To give local people their say over where and what type of houses should be built, the Parish Council decided to embark on producing a Meppershall Neighbourhood Plan, but the Plan is about much more than directing housing development. It seeks to protect and enhance local services and facilities, retain the rural character of the village and recognise the quality of the landscape and buildings. It has been compiled by a Neighbourhood Plan Steering group including Parish Council Members, community volunteers and local specialists. Additional help has been sought from CBC, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity and input from residents.

The Meppershall Neighbourhood Plan reflects community-wide comments, observations and concerns about the future, combining them with census data, strategic and statistical information into a plan which seeks to make Meppershall an even better place to live and work, both now and for future generations.

Acknowledgements

The Neighbourhood planning team would like to express our sincere thanks to everyone that has helped with the creation of this document, provided supporting information and overall input. We would also like to thank all the past and present residents of Meppershall for their feedback and support.

In addition we would like to express special thanks to the following groups and individuals:

Village Planning team, Meppershall Parish Council, Meppershall Messenger, Central Bedfordshire Council, BRCC and the following individuals; Richard Bulley, Neil Chambers, Graeme Foster, Albane Lester, Marc Neilson, Paul Smith, Roger Smith, Julie Stock, Bob Lovelock, John Chapman, Tom Price, Sally Chapman and the current team Mark Thomason, Kris Karslake, Alessandra Marabese, Andrew Pain, John Parsons and Lucy Standbridge.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. In 2011, the Localism Act introduced a new opportunity for local communities to shape their future formally as part of the planning system. Neighbourhood Plans can be produced by Parish Councils and when they have gone through all the required steps and processes, they become part of the development plan for the area. This means that any planning applications will have to take account of policies contained within the Neighbourhood Plan. It also provides local people with a say on how land use and buildings can develop over time, such as protecting open spaces and improving local character.
- 1.2. Producing a Neighbourhood Plan is a formal process involving several stages, governed by the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, but critically important is that the Plan is developed with continuing community involvement. In order to rigorously test the policies of a Neighbourhood Plan, an independent examination is carried out. The Neighbourhood Plan must conform to the following 'basic conditions':
 - Consistency with local planning policy
 - Demonstrates how the plan will contribute towards sustainable development
 - Regard to national policy
 - General conformity with strategic local policy
 - Contributing to the achievement of sustainable development
 - Compatibility with EU obligations
 - Meet prescribed conditions and comply with prescribed matters
- 1.3. Once the Plan has passed Examination, it is voted upon in a referendum by Parish residents and if a simple majority 'yes' vote is achieved, then the Neighbourhood Plan is 'made' by Central Bedfordshire Council and comes into force as a planning document with legal weight in decision-making.

Why should Meppershall have a Neighbourhood Plan?

- 1.4. The four purposes for which Meppershall Parish Council took on the challenge of producing a Neighbourhood Plan are to ensure that in the short and medium term:
 - There is a clear plan for the evolution of the Parish
 - New development is sympathetic to the village
 - That any benefits arising from new development built in the village are guided to be of maximum advantage to existing and new residents
 - The special character, landscape and historical qualities of the village are highlighted and protected for the future

The Designated Plan Area

The Neighbourhood Area was designated on the 6th December 2017 and is contiguous with the Parish boundary.

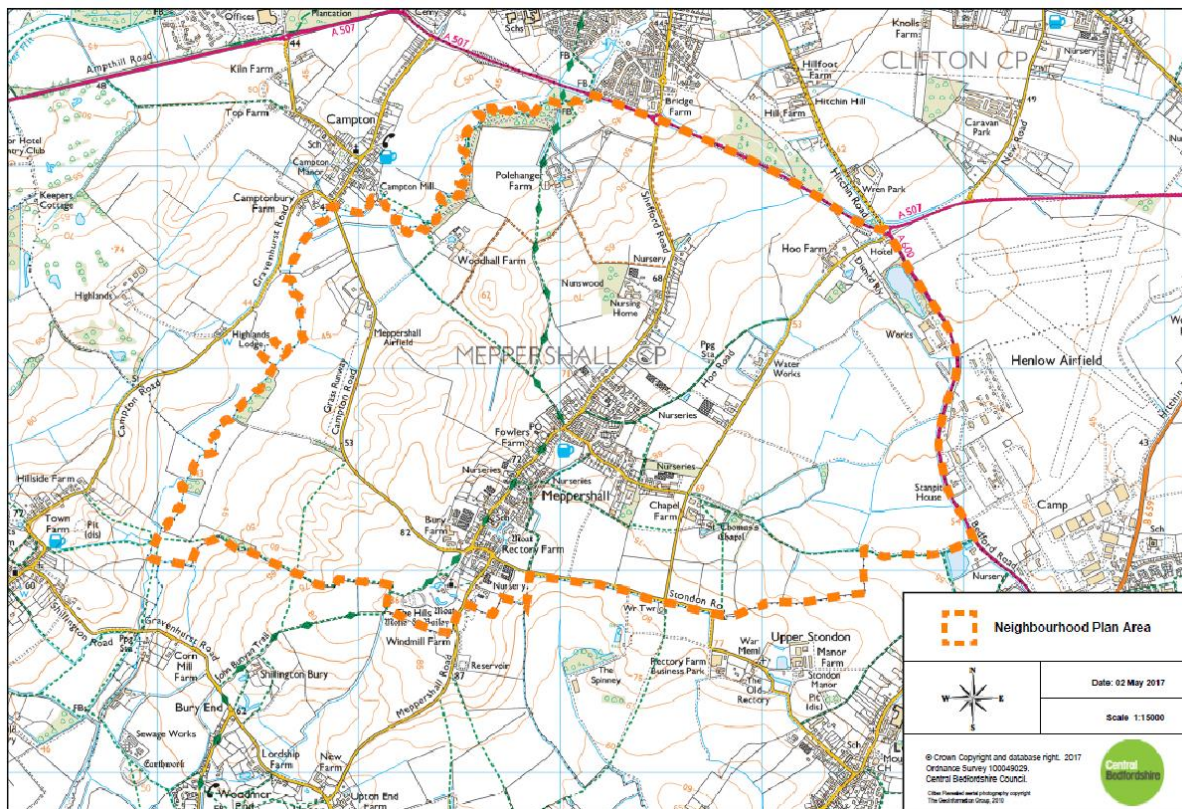


FIGURE 1: MEPPERSHALL PARISH BOUNDARY MAY 2017

2. The Strategic Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's approach to sustainable development. The latest iteration was published in February 2019. At the heart of the NPPF is the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. Essentially, it is about positive growth with economic, social and environmental gains being sought simultaneously through the planning system. Neighbourhood planning forms part of the NPPF approach to planning, to allow local communities to shape sustainable development within their area and to enable local communities to address their strategic needs and priorities. The NPPF states that Neighbourhood Plans should set out a positive vision for the future of the local area with planning policies to determine decisions on planning applications, including policies which set out the quality of development that should be expected for the area, based on stated objectives for the area's future and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics. However, a Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and plan positively to support these policies.

Sustainable development

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

Local Planning Documents

- 2.4. The current Local Plan currently consists of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2009 and the Site Allocations Development Plan Document 2011. Central Bedfordshire Council is undertaking a new Local Plan up to 2035, which was submitted for Examination in April 2018. This Local Plan includes new policies for development management as well as allocating sites for new housing and employment development.

3. Parish Description

- 3.1. Meppershall is a village around 12 miles south of Bedford and 13 miles north of Luton and lies on a low ridge above the valleys of the Flit and Ivel rivers. The dwellings are strung out for almost a mile along Shefford Road and the High Street and the village is surrounded by farmland. The village and its manor were mentioned in the Domesday Book in 1086 - with the entry reading: *Malpertesselle/Maperteshale: Gilbert FitzSolomon*. The Parish lies close to the North Hertfordshire District Council area and located within the area of the Unitary Council of Central Bedfordshire.

History and Heritage

- 3.2. In 1086, the Domesday Book notes that the Manor of Meppershall comprised five villagers, four smallholders and two slaves. These eleven people would have been heads of household, so the number needs to be multiplied by a factor of at least four. This suggests a population of fifty or below making the settlement a small one.
- 3.3. Census figures from 1801 to 1911 rose from 309 to 610. Unlike many parishes it does not show a marked dip in the period of the great agricultural depression of 1873 to 1896, perhaps due to its proximity to the growing small town of Shefford. The population then rose to over 1700 by 2011.
- 3.4. The village has many historic sites contained within its boundary. The Hills, a medieval castle ruin, is described below. It sits in the grounds of the Manor House, a fine Jacobean building that replaced an earlier manor house destroyed by fire in the 16th century which belonged to the De Meppershall family for nearly 300 years following 1086; however, the present house is early 17th century. There is a picture of the Manor House elsewhere.
The village is blessed with other fine historic buildings, such as St Mary's Church, a Norman Chapel (St Thomas's Chapel), a thatched cottage on Rectory Road - all of which are pictured in the Plan; several Georgian houses, including the former Rectory (Monks Pool), and farmhouses such as Manor Farm and Woodhall Farm.
The village school (Meppershall CE Academy, is housed in a distinctive Victorian building on the High Street, situated next to Rogers Bakery, which is also originally Victorian.
Meppershall also has several houses dating from the early 1800's, some of which are hidden from view behind more recent developments.
- 3.5. The oldest historical site in the village is probably the Castle, thought to date to about 1100. The Castle, known as 'The Hills', consists of the remains of a motte with two baileys located to the south west of the modern village and lies close to the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, which has a 12th century tower and transept. The nave and aisles of the church were added in Victorian times. Of note is the 12-sided font, from the 15th century. St. Thomas Chapel used to be associated with the Gilbertine Priory of Chicksands, having been built in the 12th century in memory of, and dedicated to St Thomas a Becket. The monks and nuns of the Priory were thought to travel across the fields and tracks to the Chapel to worship; stories were told of a series of tunnels linking the Chapel with Chicksands, but no evidence has been found for this. More recently it has been used as a barn for Chapel Farm. The Norman doorway to the chapel is a striking feature of the building.

- 3.6. Over the past years, it has been the policy of Meppershall Parish Council to encourage developers and the local authority to use names with local and historical connections for new roads and other village facilities, including historical field names, geographical features and notable villagers. It is considered to be important to maintain links with the past of the village. The following are some examples of how street names that have already been used relative to the historical links:

Historical connections;

- **Glovers Drive:** A recent development on the site of the old glove factory, demolished 2018.
- **Old Nurseries Close:** Built on the site of the former Larsen Nursery.
- **Taylors Close:** A development built on the site of the Five Bells PH and land owned by the Taylor family.

Notable villagers

- **Buxton Close:** Named for a former Church stalwart Edna Buxton and her husband Joe, a long-serving Chair of the Parish Council.
- **Robinson Grove:** The second son of the village Blacksmith who emigrated to the America's in the 17th Century. After an eventful life, including the founding of townships which are now cities, was killed by Native Americans whilst out hunting with his sons.

Geographical and land features

- **Crackle Hill:** Related to the location of the development and the surrounding geographical features
- **Lyspitt Common:** As it related to the common land.

Names suggested for the upcoming future developments,

Stocken House, Davidson Homes development (59 Shefford Road);

- **Stocking Drive:** Land broadly corresponding to the site in 1846 referring to old English 'Stokking'. This would be an appropriate name as the house to be demolished for the development is called Stocken House.
- **The Glebe:** This name dates to 1506 and refers to church land in the area near Nunswood.
- **Nunlane:** This name dates to 1506 and was the top end of the medieval trackway to Polehanger Greene.
- **Willow Drive or Lane:** Before 1765 Willow Lane ran from opposite 40 Shefford Road to Nunswood.
- **Doxhall Drive:** Part of one the medieval "great fields" near to the location
- **Welsting Drive:** Dates to 1441 from Welsting Farm located nearby but now lost.
- **Halberycroft:** Dates to 1441 as is old English for a wholesome of salutary place

Bovis Development (32 Shefford Road);

- **Leofwin (Avenue):** Name of the Saxon Thane holding the manor of Malpertesselle (Meppershall) prior to 1066.

- **Gilbert (Place):** Meppershall is listed in the Domesday Book. At that time the village was held by Gilbert son of Solomon, who possibly came to England from Normandy with William the Conqueror.
- **(de) Halstead (Way):** Reginald de Halstead (1232) was the first recorded Rector of Meppershall.
- **Leventhorpe (Drive):** Name of the first owners of the Polehanger Estate granted by Henry VIII following the suppression of the Knights Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem who were holders since before 1244.
- **Emery (Gardens):** Mistresses Sarah and Elizabeth Emery founded a school for educating the poor in Meppershall in 1698, which is now Meppershall VA Academy.
- **Blundell (Way):** John Blundell was a Yeoman farmer, born in 1704, died on 15th September 1774 and buried in the churchyard at Meppershall.
- **Pestell (Way):** Thomas Pestell was a farmer tenant at Chapel Farm, Churchwarden, Overseer of the Poor, Trustee of the Emery School and Highway Surveyor. Born 1720 and died in 1785, he is buried in the churchyard at Meppershall.
- **Webster (Drive):** Rector of Meppershall from 1791 to 1833. Justice of the Peace and social reformer with Samuel Whitbread I of Southill Park.

Landscape

- 3.7. The landscape is predominantly under agricultural use, and there are small scattered areas of woodland and a strong sense of elevation with wide ranging views across the surrounding areas. This increases sensitivity of settlement edges to development. Meppershall is located within the Upper Gravenhurst-Meppershall Clay Hills Landscape Character Type which contains two groups of undulating low hills.
- 3.8. The majority of the surrounding land area of Meppershall parish is classified as grade 2 agricultural land, with some areas of grade 3 to the east and west of the village.

Services and facilities

- 3.9. Services and facilities in Meppershall include a lower school (Meppershall has had a school since the 1600's), a bakery, a convenience store which includes a newsagents and post office and two pubs serving food. A new Village Hall opened in 2019 which also has a bar and a café serving food. Local towns including Shefford (approx. 2 miles), Flitwick (approx. 10 miles) Ampthill (approx. 9 miles) and Hitchin (approx. 7 miles) have a wider range of facilities including secondary education, healthcare, banking, supermarkets, restaurants/takeaways, sport, recreational and entertainment venues.

Population and Household Data

- 3.10. The geo-demographic profile identifies the area as consisting of “thriving families with children and careers”, “single people privately renting”, and “householders in inexpensive village homes”. ONS data for the Meppershall area reveals that the median age of residents is 45, and that the area has more residents under 16 than over 65. At the 2011 census, the village had a population of 1,750 people and the majority of households are families. See table below.

2011 Census parish profile: Meppershall

Total population: 1,750

Households: 680

Dwellings: 690

Population density: 2.4 people per hectare

Area: 720 hectares

Age group, all people

	No.	%	CBC %	Eng %
0-4	80	4.6	6.3	6.3
5-15	250	14.1	13.3	12.6
16-17	50	2.8	2.6	2.5
18-64	1,080	61.8	62.1	62.3
65-84	230	13.0	13.8	14.1
85+	70	3.7	1.8	2.3
Total	1,750	100	100	100

Gender, all people

	No.	%	CBC %	Eng %
Male	840	48.0	49.5	49.2
Female	910	52.0	50.5	50.8
Total	1,750	100	100	100

Marital status, people aged 16+

	No.	%	CBC %	Eng %
Single	320	22.3	29.2	34.6
Married	870	61.0	52.5	46.6
Civil partnership	0	0.1	0.1	0.2
Separated / Divorced	130	9.4	11.9	11.7
Widowed	100	7.2	6.3	6.9
Total	1,420	100	100	100

Religion, all people

	No.	%	CBC %	Eng %
Christian	1,170	67.0	62.2	59.4
Other religion	10	0.7	2.6	8.7
No religion	440	25.0	28.4	24.7
Not stated	130	7.3	6.8	7.2
Total	1,750	100	100	100

FIGURE 2: 2011 CENSUS

4. Consultation Summary

- 4.1. The first 'Village Plan' for Meppershall was written by a group of dedicated volunteers in 2008. This document proved to be a resource for villagers and planners to better understand residents' views about their community.
- 4.2. In 2014, the Parish Council set up The Village Plan Review Group to prepare a Village Plan covering the next ten years.
- 4.3. The project was launched at the 2015 Meppershall Summer Fair, and the group devised 9 questionnaires, each seeking the respondent's views on a separate topic area.
- 4.4. The response from the residents was very encouraging; its breadth and passion showed what a vibrant and open community Meppershall is. The Plan recognised many positive aspects of our village, which attract a wide range of families to live here: our open countryside and green spaces; excellent playgroup and lower school; a variety of organisations in which to become involved. However, it also recognised the downsides, particularly speeding traffic, the ever-increasing traffic flow and parking problems and housing development pressure.
- 4.5. The Village plan was approved at the Parish Council meeting that took place on the 13th March 2017. The plan was subsequently published to the residents of Meppershall throughout April 2017 both via the website www.meppershall.org and a printed summary hand delivered together with the Meppershall Messenger.
- 4.6. Following the Village plan publication, the Parish council discussed the potential of a neighbourhood plan and in June 2017 the Neighbourhood plan steering group was approved, with a supporting article published in the July edition of the Meppershall Messenger.
- 4.7. Following a further Meppershall Messenger publication in August, two public meetings took place at the Village Hall on the 14th and 16th October. The purpose of the public meetings was to raise awareness of the Neighbourhood plan, introduce the team, and explain the process and to discuss potential policies.
- 4.8. The current team elected to build on the extensive questionnaire data collected in 2015/16 rather than mount a specific further survey exercise, however public events were used to conduct surveys in order to make sure policies were still aligned with the community's expectations (example: MeppFest).
- 4.9. The neighbourhood planning team used the following forms of communications to continue open dialog,
 - Monthly updates at the Meppershall Parish Council meetings
 - Meppershall Messenger, The Meppershall Messenger is a free magazine published 10 months per annum and is seen by many residents as the main public voice of the village.
 - Banners located in two key areas of the villages, outside the Sugar Loaf Public House and a second on Walnut Tree Way, which is on route to the new Village Hall
 - Meppershall Notice board (Facebook), an online forum for village residents
 - Attendance at village public events, including MEPPFEST, Opening of the new Village Hall (open day)
 - Adhoc publications to support specific topics – example Green Infrastructure plan

- 4.10. A previous Green Infrastructure Plan was completed and published in 2011, as such it was important to update the plan as part of the neighbourhood planning process. A number of publications were made to raise awareness of the Green Infrastructure planning workshop, this included online publications on the Meppershall Notice board, in the Meppershall Messenger and a flyer hand delivered to every village home.
- 4.11. The Green Infrastructure workshop subsequently took place on the 23rd January 2019 at the village hall. It was great to see more than 50 residents in attendance from different age groups (16-80 years of age). The workshop was a great success and it was hugely encouraging for the neighbourhood planning team to have such great attendance and engagement.



FIGURE 3: MEPPERSHALL SUMMER FAIR 2018, ADDITIONAL DATA COLLECTION



FIGURE 4: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PUBLIC PLANNING EVENT JAN 2019

5. Vision and Objectives

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

Vision

Our vision for Meppershall is to enhance the rural character of the Parish whilst maintaining the hilltop aspect and linear nature of the village. A variety of homes will be provided on small scale developments to accommodate residents through all stages of life. Green spaces and biodiversity will be protected and enhanced to promote wellbeing in the community. Local services, community facilities and businesses will be supported to ensure that the village and its residents flourish.

Objectives

1. The rural character of the Parish will be maintained, ensuring that the scale and design of development is in keeping with the rural setting.
2. The attractiveness of the landscape views and the rich ecological biodiversity will be maintained and enhanced.
3. The historic character of the village will be retained, including the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and their settings and the historic landscape.
4. Promote and inform residents and visitors of the rich heritage of the village and its offerings
5. The green spaces within and around the village will be easily accessible and ecologically diverse and green corridors will be enhanced. New green spaces will be provided and protected in the future.
6. New housing will provide for the needs of the local area with the emphasis on providing smaller homes for younger people and older people who may wish to downsize.
7. New housing will be designed to a high quality, the form and bulk of buildings respecting the rural setting particularly at the periphery of the settlement.
8. Community facilities and retail outlets will be supported and enhanced to ensure the village can service the community's needs locally and sustainably.
9. Existing local recreation facilities will be protected and improved and opportunities for enhanced sport and recreation will be supported.
10. Home working and the re-use of brownfield land for business purposes will be encouraged and existing businesses including agriculture in the Parish will be supported to retain local employment opportunities
11. The reliance on cars, particularly single occupancy journeys, will be reduced by improving walking and cycling access within the village and to local services and to improve both road and pedestrian safety throughout the village. The use of public transport will be encouraged.

6. Sustainable Development

- 6.1. Reflecting the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the consideration of locations for new housing development by Central Bedfordshire through the emerging Local Plan, there are three over-arching (Development Principles) principles to ensure that new development is sustainable, achieves high design & environmental standards, reflects local preferences in terms of location and especially important, delivers new community infrastructure.
- 6.2. The Parish has a distinctive character and the village has relatively recently had a large number of new developments being constructed or given permission. All further new development should protect, reflect and enhance the rural character of the village. There is a need for development to contribute to the quality of life for residents, including healthy lifestyles, access to local services, green open spaces, safe places for active play, and to be accessible by walking and cycling and public transport.
- 6.3. It is generally accepted that new development is necessary but there is a strong feeling that this should meet the needs of local people - existing and future generations, applying the principles of sustainable development to reflect environmental, economic and social needs. The policies in this plan reflect the issues facing the Parish, feeding into this plans' vision and objectives.
- 6.4. For Meppershall, the meaning of sustainable development is set out below.

Sustainable Development Principles

Sustainable development for Meppershall means that development should be:

- At an appropriate scale and in locations where it would support the community.
- Of a high standard of design, reflecting the character of the surroundings.
- Contributing towards community infrastructure and supporting community cohesion.
- Providing superfast broadband (fibre optic) connections, or whatever may supersede fibre optic.
- Meeting contemporary construction, energy efficiency and water management standards.
- Located and designed to enable safe walking and cycling to local services and facilities, preferably within a 500m radius of those locations.

The following adverse impacts must be avoided:

- The loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.
- The loss or inappropriate diversion of public rights of way.
- Avoidable intrusion into open countryside.
- The loss of or damage to wildlife habitats and hedgerows and trees.
- A loss of amenity for existing residential properties and reduced efficiency for nearby businesses.
- Overloading existing utilities and services (water, drainage, sewage and waste).

7. Rural character

Setting

- 7.1. Meppershall is a linear hilltop settlement surrounded by high quality landscape. Many people come to live in the village because they value its rural character and one of the aims of the Neighbourhood Plan is to preserve and enhance this character.
- 7.2. All of the access routes into Meppershall are uphill, as the settlement is on top of a ridged hill set above the surrounding area. All are narrow roads or lanes; all have open fields to each side, with grassy banks or verges with hedgerows between the road and the fields, which are not used for pasture or grazing but are clearly in use as arable land for crops. Farm buildings are clearly in evidence from each access into the village, and are the first evidence of a settlement, being on the outskirts of the village approached from any direction. There are no high buildings visible, with the exception of the tower of St Mary's church.
- 7.3. This hilltop location defines the essential nature of the village as distinctively rural in setting and character, and completely surrounded by fields and farms. The settlement is also distinctive in that it follows the single route of the High Street/Shefford Road, with large expanses of farmland extending in any direction.
- 7.4. Surveys of residents revealed the following important points:
 - *"More than 95% of respondents feel that living in the countryside is beneficial or essential to their lifestyle"*
 - *"78% of respondents spend more than half their time in rural areas"*
 - *"The views are especially valued, as well as the peaceful environment and local paths"*
- 7.5. Residents of Meppershall are not only aware that they are in a rural environment – it's important to them.



FIGURE 5: AERIAL VIEW OF MEPPERSHALL



FIGURE 6: A VIEW FROM THE TOP OF CRACKLE HILL



FIGURE 7: A VIEW OF THE WESTERN BOUNDARY



FIGURE 8: ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE STUDENTS OF MEPPERSHALL CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

Village development and character

- 7.6. The labourers who lived in the village's earliest cottages supported the agricultural businesses which were the reason for Meppershall's existence for hundreds of years – the farms, smallholdings, and later, the glasshouse nurseries. Meppershall was known locally as "The Village of Glass" in the 19th and early 20th century precisely because of the large numbers of glasshouses surrounding the then small number of houses. From the 1970's onwards competition from abroad and cheaper transport costs meant that the agricultural economy in Meppershall saw a rapid decline. It was at this time that Meppershall's housing expansion really began, and the demographic moved from local manual labour to travelling to work in one of the surrounding larger towns or commuting to London.
- 7.7. The survey of residents indicated that they value "the local farms, glasshouses and associated market garden buildings and workmen's cottages". 95% of respondents also regard the countryside and especially arable productive farmland as a key feature of Meppershall.

- 7.8. The agricultural history of the parish forms a key part of the distinctive character of the village:
- Glasshouses are still noticeable; dilapidated though some may be – they are a valued feature.
 - The vast majority of the landscape surrounding Meppershall, and within the Parish, is arable fields, with only farm buildings on the edges of the village.
- 7.9. Looking at Meppershall from surrounding viewpoints, the view of fields on the edges of the village are predominantly unspoiled by development. Looking from the village out are views of open farmland, and in the distance the settlements of Shefford, Shillington, Campton and Gravenhurst.
- 7.10. From the 1960's the settlement of Meppershall expanded rapidly with development on land that had previously been orchards, market gardens or open space, whether fields, pastures or larger gardens. Orchard Close, Taylors Close, Brookmead, Brookside and a number of homes on Shefford Road and the High Street were built between 1950 and 1980 on what would now be termed greenfield sites.
- 7.11. These developments still followed the earlier village architectural style of a front garden with the house set back; the great majority of homes have a facility for off-road parking, keeping the roads mainly free of vehicles. An attempt was made to provide a handful of single-storey homes for the elderly, together with social housing "maisonettes", on Fildyke Road near the pub, but the style of these is greatly at variance with the majority of Meppershall homes, and they are anomalous to the prevailing style. However, many of these are still set back from the road with a spacious frontage area, comprising a common grassed amenity area.
- 7.12. Due to economic pressures, the style of development in Meppershall changed in the period starting from the 1980's onward. The density of new developments increased, resulting in much smaller, or non-existent, "front gardens" and smaller plots. Developers adopted a more uniform approach to construction, resulting in less individuality of style and design. Economic pressures also made farming less viable, and farmland became far more valuable as housing land. Government policy made change of use to housing far easier to obtain, making it more difficult for local authorities to refuse the change, despite resident's views. So, in recent years farmland has been sold for housing, and larger "estates" have been built, rather than the infill style of previous years (Coneygate/The Acres, Lyspitt, Walnut Tree/The Orchard, 32 Shefford Road, Stocken House). These new estates are distinctively different from those earlier houses in respect of density and plot size, and the lack of the front garden. Examples below show typical houses along Shefford Road, highlighting the generous front gardens followed by recent development in Coneygate and Walnut Tree Way, demonstrating the increased density of the estate style introduced.
- 7.13. The architectural style of the village was largely defined by the manner in which almost every home, whether a house or a bungalow, is set back from the road, and had a front garden with either a picket-style fence or low wall defining the boundary to the footpath or road, together with a garage to the side. There are some exceptions, like the few modern style social housing maisonettes and bungalows in Fildyke Road, but most of these exceptions are actually amongst the oldest village dwellings, being those cottages originally built as tied cottages to accommodate the farm labourers, and even some of these (opposite

the village stores, for instance) have a tiny garden with a front wall (it's possible their gardens were once larger, but were taken for the roadway in the early 20th century).

- 7.14. The majority of village homes have rooms that are quite large, with large windows allowing natural light unobstructed by homes built close alongside. The later developments may have followed an estate-style design, but as pointed out above – front gardens and off-road parking were still the norm, and these developments are not through routes in any event; passers-by and people travelling through Meppershall can't help but notice the number of gardens on display.
- 7.15. This then is the defining character of Meppershall's architectural style – space. Space both around the homes, and space within the homes. The majority (88%) of respondents to the 2015 Village Forum felt strongly that the style of housing in Meppershall was important to the feel of the village, and this characteristic should be preserved in future developments
- 7.16. Street "furniture", such as traffic signs, bus shelters, bollards etc., even modern shop fronts, are entirely absent from Meppershall, so there is nothing that would tend to indicate there is an urban aspect – this is definitely a village, and that is what makes it so attractive to residents as a place to live.
- 7.17. As you drive through you see the front gardens, with hedges and low walls, all of which reinforce the openness of the architectural style. Open space is glimpsed between the houses, through to the fields behind. And because Meppershall is atop the ridge, this view through the open space to the fields often includes a horizon and sky.
- 7.18. Any new development, whether extensions to dwellings or new dwellings or other buildings need to be carefully considered in its context to maintain this rural character. This can be done by ensuring that massing and orientation of buildings respect the adjacent buildings, allow spaces between buildings and complement the street scene. Boundary treatment must be 'traditional' such as hedgerows, or low walls. Large masses of building or extensive use of hard landscaping would represent inappropriate 'urbanisation' of the area and erode the character so much valued by the residents.
- 7.19. As mentioned above, earlier developments such as Orchard Close comprise houses with front gardens and generous space between them, whereas more recent developments such as Coneygate/The Acres and Walnut Tree Way (illustrated below) feature houses noticeably closer together with a much higher density. Future developments should reflect the prevailing architectural heritage of Meppershall and reinforce this, rather than pursue the estate-style of the most recent designs, in order that the overall heritage of the village is not lost irrevocably. Developers should be more mindful and supportive of the village character.



FIGURE 9: A VIEW OF THE HIGH STREET, SHOWING THE TYPICAL FRONT GARDENS



FIGURE 10: A VIEW OF SHEFFORD ROAD



FIGURE 11: A VIEW OF WALNUT TREE WAY, A RECENT DEVELOPMENT



FIGURE 12: A VIEW OF CONEYGATE, A RECENT DEVELOPMENT

Policy RC1: Rural character

The rural character of the village and its surroundings should be respected through new development by ensuring that

- The scale and character of new buildings are modest and in keeping with the rural setting.
- New buildings respect the hilltop position of Meppershall and are sympathetic to the contours of the land by ensuring that building heights, roofscapes and massing do not dominate the skyline.
- The sense of space between and around existing buildings is retained where appropriate, particularly where views of the countryside beyond the village are available. The design of new buildings should ensure that adequate space is provided around them to compliment the rural character of the village.
- Boundary treatment and landscaping schemes are carefully designed so as to prevent undue urbanisation of the location.

8. Natural Environment

Green Infrastructure

- 8.1. Green Infrastructure is the network of green spaces, access routes, wildlife habitats, landscapes and historic features which provide: a healthy and diverse environment; attractive places to live and visit; a good quality of life and a sustainable future.
- 8.2. In the Village Survey, 95% of respondents said that the countryside was either essential or contributed to their lifestyle. They particularly identified that views of the countryside and access into the countryside were important features of the village.
- 8.3. Meppershall Parish Council commissioned the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) to produce a Green Infrastructure Plan (GI Plan) for the Parish. This was commissioned in 2019 and endorsed by the Parish Council in July 2020. The GI Plan is a background document to the Neighbourhood Plan and identifies a number of projects and improvements to green infrastructure in the Parish.

Landscape

- 8.4. Meppershall is a linear village with its axis running along the crest of a ridge. The church of St Mary the Virgin is at the highest point, 87 metres (286 feet) above sea level. This position provides some spectacular views, particularly to the northwest towards Campton and eastwards towards Stondon; it also makes the approaches to the village quite distinctive.
- 8.5. The Parish is split into three of the defined character areas in the Landscape Character Assessment. The Barton-le-Clay Vale (LCA 5B) is a flat, open agricultural landscape affording distant views and dominated by intensive arable cropping. Farmland habitats such as arable field margins, hedgerows, ponds, ditches and improved grassland are dominant and support a range of farmland species. In general, tree cover and woodland are scarce in this area.
- 8.6. The Upper Gravenhurst-Meppershall Clay Hills (LCA 8D), to the north of Barton-le-Clay Vale, forms two sets of hills with Meppershall sitting on top of the eastern section. There is a strong sense of elevation with distant views across the adjacent vales.
- 8.7. To the east of the Parish where the land slopes down towards the Ivel Valley, the Landscape Character Area is known as the Upper Ivel Clay Valley (4C) which shares many visual characteristics with the Barton-Le Clay Vale.
- 8.8. The Landscape Character Assessment notes the following key sensitivities across these three landscape character types:
 - Clear open views – across and along the Hit and Ivel valleys towards the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, northwards to the Greensand Ridge, along the valley and views from the valley looking up to the Clay Hills. These views are sensitive to change and interruption, especially through development on village edges and valley sides.
 - Remaining hedgerows and historic (early Enclosure) field patterns, although many of these patterns have been lost to larger scale agriculture.
 - Remaining areas of ancient woodland, including Nunswood. These are small fragments of historic woodland cover and are particularly sensitive landscape features due to their isolated nature.

- The overall rural qualities of the Parish, including high levels of tranquillity, are noted as both important and sensitive to change.
- 8.9. The Landscape Character Assessment recommends an overall landscape strategy of Enhance (conserve, restore and improve positive features) for the Clay Hills, and one of Enhance and Renew for the valleys. Suggested examples of landscape renewal include planting of new woodlands and trees in the landscape. New tree planting has recently been embraced by Polehanger Farm and the Parish Council.
- 8.10. The Landscape Character Assessment also offers guidance on new development, and in particular recommends that any new development in these character areas:
- Conserves the clear open views and visual relationships between different landscapes.
 - Avoids further ribbon development, especially along villages edges and roads.
 - Enhances the visual presence of the River Hit.
 - Ensures development on skylines is integrated and avoids 'spill' down slopes.
- 8.11. The Parish also lies adjacent to the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership area, recognised and funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund because of the importance of the local landscape, its fragility and the opportunities for protecting and enhancing it.
- 8.12. Some change that occurs in the landscape is outside planning control, but where planning permission is required for development, landscape features should be considered in a systematic way. Proposals for new development should include an appropriate landscape analysis either as a freestanding report or as part of a design and access statement.



FIGURE 13: OPEN VIEWS FROM AROUND THE VILLAGE

Policy NE1: Protecting the Landscape

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

Development which would impact on the skyline must be in keeping with adjacent development and not introduce over-dominant features either on the skyline or cascading downslope or upslope.

Field patterns and elements of the landscape heritage of the area, including ridge and furrow, field ponds, mature trees and historic hedgerows should be protected and incorporated into any landscape design schemes and their long-term maintenance ensured.

For every tree felled to make way for a new development, it must be replaced by 2 new trees planted on either Meppershall Parish Council Land, on local Meppershall farm land or on the development itself. The developer will be expected to pay a contribution towards the upkeep.

Biodiversity

- 8.13. Protection of the nature conservation interest in the Parish, which is valued by local people, is critical, with reference to the important habitats and landscape. A wildlife corridor is an area of habitat connecting wildlife populations separated by human activities or structures (such as roads and built development).
- 8.14. The Parish has two designated County Wildlife Sites (CWS), Nunswood and Henlow Pit. Nunswood is lowland mixed deciduous woodland. County Wildlife Sites are recognised as important for wildlife when assessed against a set of criteria, which considers site size, diversity, rarity, fragility, typicalness and recorded history. The designation does confer some protection on the site, with the (Pre-Submission) Central Bedfordshire Local Plan Policy EE3 (Nature Conservation) stating that the Council will “ensure that development would not be permitted that would adversely affect County Wildlife Sites”.
- 8.15. Nunswood semi-ancient woodland is a primarily Ash and Oak private woodland, with trees estimated at dating back between 120 and 140 years. More recent introductions include Field Maple and Hazel between 50 and 70 years old. The woodland also supports additional woody shrubs from boundary hedges such as Blackthorn, Hawthorn and Guelder Rose. Canopy cover is varied within the woodland and as such, the woodland supports a variety of plant and animal life at both canopy, understory and woodland floor level. This includes a large rookery that calls the taller trees home, a variety of thrush species, tree and ground-nesting birds, foxes, muntjac deer, rabbits, voles and other rodents. Insect life is also abundant within the woodland particularly in areas with fallen veteran trees and in larger concentrations during Spring when the carpet of native bluebells cover the woodland floor. Due to its proximity to former piggeries, the woodland floor in areas is extremely fertile and supports very vigorous growth of native weeds and grasses from Spring onwards.

- 8.16. Grassland on border with Gravenhurst. River meadows being farmed in the traditional manner with free ranging beef cattle receiving minimal artificial inputs on land unsuitable for arable cropping due to the possibility of winter flooding from the river
- 8.17. All proposals for new development will be required to demonstrate how the design has taken into account its potential impact on local habitats and species. This will include sites and features that are locally important, including hills and the river valleys, trees, hedges and woodland, ponds and watercourses and unimproved grassland. Developers will be required to ensure that appropriate measures are put in place to protect wildlife and take every available opportunity to enhance biodiversity and important habitats.
- 8.18. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a concept proposed in the Governments 25 Year Environment Plan and mandated as a condition of planning permission in the 2019 Environment Bill. Biodiversity Net Gain requires a 10% increase in biodiversity after development, compared to the level of biodiversity prior to the development taking place. In locations such as Meppershall where new development will abut the countryside, it is really important that this principle is adopted to mitigate the impact of losing biodiversity value of undeveloped land to development. All new development should seek to increase biodiversity such as incorporating bat boxes etc. into new buildings, particularly at the edges of the settlement. Landscaping schemes will be required to use native species for planting schemes, particularly those found locally.
- 8.19. Where Sustainable Urban Drainage systems (SUDS) are required to serve new developments, every opportunity to link them into habitats should be taken.

Policy NE2: Nature Conservation

New development will be required to protect and enhance existing natural features of sites, enhance biodiversity. All development should provide a net biodiversity gain of 10% as set out in the Environment Bill 2019 (or as superseded).

Provision of appropriate species-related measures will be required, including, for example, swift bricks, bat and owl boxes and the incorporation of native species into landscaping schemes.

Opportunities should also be taken by developers and landowners to

- **Create new and link areas of existing biodiversity value to create more robust networks, especially woodlands, grasslands and hedgerows.**
- **Link sustainable drainage solutions in new development to complement nature conservation objectives.**

9. Heritage

Listed Buildings and Conservation Area

- 9.1. Meppershall has always been essentially a linear settlement with a rectangular enclosure containing the church and castle/manor house site at its south western end. Excavations have revealed evidence of medieval settlement activity at several locations along the High Street. There are 14 listed buildings in the Parish, including the Grade II* listed St Thomas Chapel, Chapel Road and the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Church Road. The Church is constructed of local ironstone and is visible from long distances as it sits up on the hill.
- 9.2. The Conservation Area was designated on the 12th February 1981, in accordance with the provisions of section 277 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971.
- The Conservation area schedule; All that area of land in the parish of Meppershall in the County of Bedfordshire comprising that part of Church Road extending from the south-westerly boundary of the property known as number 13 Church Road to the termination of that road, including St Mary's Church, the ancient monument known as the Hills and properties known as the Manor House and the Rectory, together with part of Shillington Road between the junctions with Rectory and Marywells and including properties known as numbers 2, 4 and 6 Shillington Road, number 1 Marywells and numbers 6, 8, 10 and 12 Rectory Road. The area also includes field OS 5000 located between St Mary's Church and Shillington Road and field OS 3286 to the west and north-west of the Manor House, together with the adjoining land on the west side of Church Road, extending westwards to the boundary with the Playing Fields and northwards to Campton Road.***
- 9.3. There is one Scheduled monument in Meppershall, known as the 'The Hills' motte and bailey. It was first listed on the 13th December 1929, the listing can be viewed on the Historic England website, number 1010370, National Grid Reference: TL 13283 35857.
- Details from the Historic England Website,

Reasons for Designation

Motte and bailey castles are medieval fortifications introduced into Britain by the Normans. They comprised a large conical mound of earth or rubble, the motte, surmounted by a palisade and a stone or timber tower. In a majority of examples an embanked enclosure containing additional buildings, the bailey, adjoined the motte. Motte castles and motte-and-bailey castles acted as garrison forts during offensive military operations, as strongholds, and, in many cases, as aristocratic residences and as centres of local or royal administration. Built in towns, villages and open countryside, motte and bailey castles generally occupied strategic positions dominating their immediate locality and, as a result, are the most visually impressive monuments of the early post-Conquest period surviving in the modern landscape. Over 600 motte castles or motte-and-bailey castles are recorded nationally, with examples known from most regions. As one of a restricted range of recognised early post-Conquest monuments, they are particularly important for the study of Norman Britain and the development of the feudal system. Although many were occupied for only a short period of time, motte castles continued to be built and occupied from the 11th to the 13th centuries, after which they were superseded by other types of castle.

'The Hills' is a very well preserved motte and bailey castle which is essentially undisturbed and retains high archaeological potential. It is one of few such monuments in Bedfordshire which have clearly documented links with historical events.

Details

The castle known as 'The Hills' is a motte with two baileys located to the north-east. The motte is an earthen mound about 25m in diameter and almost 5m high from the bottom of the encircling ditch. This ditch is about 10m wide and 1m or so in depth. (The motte was the central stronghold of the castle and would have held a stout wooden tower.) The inner bailey is in the form of an island, fortified by an extension of the motte ditch, and is kidney-shaped in plan, measuring 50m long by up to 20m wide. The bailey is raised to a level of 2-2.5m above the bottom of the ditch. Beyond the inner bailey, separated by a 10m wide ditch, is a second, outer bailey. This is larger and roughly triangular, measuring about 60m north south, by 40m wide at its south end. The outer bailey is also lower, being only 1m or so above the bottom of the ditch but is strengthened on the north-east side by a bank 0.5-1m in height. (The respective decline in height was intentional, enabling a clear line-of-sight from the top of the motte with no potential blind-spots to shield attacking forces.) The defensive ditch completes its circuit around the eastern side of the bailey and at the north-east corner is the remains of a leat which once supplied water to the ditch. This leat is about 8m long by 3m wide and 1m deep. The castle is considered to date to the reign of King Stephen of Blois and to have been besieged by him in 1138, during the siege of Bedford.

- 9.4. It is essential that the location and design of new development has regard to the historic character of the local area. This protection is in accordance with the guidance contained in paragraphs 192-199 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Local Plan policies provide protected for the historic features in the Parish.
- 9.5. As well as the Church and Manor House mentioned above, Meppershall has a number of other buildings worthy of note:
 - Sugar Loaf PH – The Sugar Loaf is the only pub as such in the village. There has been a pub on this site for over 150 years, although the present building dates from 1950. The Sugar Loaf offers the traditional pub experience and social amenity.
 - Meppershall VA Academy – the village has had a school since the 1600's, and the current building comprises a fine example of early Victorian schools, constructed from local yellow Bedfordshire bricks, with many attractive features.
 - Fowlers Farmhouse – an attractive brick-built building on the High Street dating from the late 17th century, now a private residence, and listed Grade II "of special interest" .
 - Monks Pool – a large house, which was formerly the Rectory, first recorded as such in 1607. It was substantially reworked and extended in the late 18th century, but the house is still partially surrounded by a medieval homestead moat fed by a spring or springs. It passed into private ownership in 1956. Originally the boundary between Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire passed through the sitting room.
 - Manor Farmhouse – dates from the mid-17th century, and the original half-timbers can still be seen above the ground floor. Grade II Special Interest listed.
 - Chapel Farmhouse – dates from the late 18th century, with an inscribed brick from 1786. Again, Grade II Special Interest

- The Hollies (105 High Street) – another Grade II Special Interest building, mid-17th Century in origin, reworked in the 18th and having a disused Glasshouse/Nursery behind.
- Old Coach House, 10/12 Rectory Road – dating from the early 17th Century (at the latest) and now a single dwelling. Meppershall’s only remaining thatched house, it being likely that others were destroyed in 1899 by the “Great Fire of Meppershall”, which consumed 6 cottages, a farmhouse and numerous outbuildings, leaving 30 people homeless.
- Meppershall Village Stores and Post Office – the only remaining retail business in the village, the “Old Shop” at 36 High Street having converted to a residential property some time previously, the Village Stores is a lifeline for many residents who cannot, or do not wish to, drive into Shefford to shop, the bus service being so infrequent.
- Rogers Bakery – there has been a bakery on this site (next to the village school) since at least 1853, and it provides a social amenity as well as fulfilling the more prosaic function of fresh baked goods.

Archaeology

- 9.6. From pottery and soil-based evidence, the core area of Meppershall has been in continuous occupation since the Iron Age. A number of archaeological evaluations have been carried out on land around the High Street with the most recent being in January 2016 and February 2017. Archaeological Solutions Ltd. conducted an evaluation and built heritage assessment on the land at 100 High St. This evaluation was carried out prior to the validation of a proposed development which did not proceed.
- 9.7. It is considered to be of prime importance that the known evidence of the village heritage will be protected for the future and that any proposals which might adversely affect any as yet unknown heritage sites will be subject to rigorous scrutiny, physical investigations should be required prior to any proposals receiving approval.

Policy HE1: Protecting and enhancing local heritage assets

All development proposals affecting identified local heritage assets will be required to take into account the character, context and setting of the assets.

Because of the evidence of settlement since prehistoric times, developers must undertake investigation to any proposed site in order to ensure that valuable archaeological artefacts and records are not lost.

Development should be designed taking account of local styles, materials and detail. The loss of, or substantial harm, to a local asset, will be resisted unless exceptional circumstance is demonstrated.



FIGURE 14: MANOR FARM, HIGH STREET



FIGURE 15: ST THOMAS CHAPEL, VIEW FROM ACROSS COUNTRYSIDE



FIGURE 16: ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE STUDENTS OF MEPPERSHALL CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY



FIGURE 17: MANOR HOUSE



FIGURE 18: ST MARY'S CHURCH

10. Green Space and Recreation

Local Green Spaces

- 10.1. Consultation on the Green Infrastructure Plan showed that people place a high value on the relationship between the village, the countryside and on the open spaces that help to define the landscape and character of the area. Designation of Local Green Spaces (LGS) give a very high level of protection to such open spaces. In the NPPF it is stated that in Neighbourhood Plans, local communities can identify green areas of particular importance to them for special protection and to rule out new development, other than in “very special circumstances”. The proposed designations are in accordance with the requirement in Paragraph 100 of the NPPF:
- The green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves.
 - The area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife.
 - The area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.
- 10.2. The GI Plan assessed 10 candidates for possible Local Green Space designation and 7 of these currently meet the requirements and are listed in the policy. Two further spaces, an extension to Old Road Meadow and Taylor’s Close green space do not currently meet the criteria, but with enhancements would do so. It is therefore considered that these two spaces should also be protected from development for their potential.

Policy GSR1: Local Green Spaces

The following areas shown on the Policies Map are designated as Local Green Spaces:

- Centenary Field
- Nunswood
- Old Road Meadow
- Sandy View woodland
- Land surrounding St Mary’s Church and Manor House
- Polehanger Farm River Woodland
- Wry Close Allotments

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

Development which would result in the loss of the potential Local Green Spaces at Old Road Meadow (extension) and Taylor’s Close Greenspace shall be strongly resisted.

Recreational open space

10.3. The following open spaces are in Meppershall:

- St. Mary's Church and Churchyard – owned by Diocese of St. Albans.
- Gregory Close Play Area – owned by Central Bedfordshire Council.
- Centenary Field - Children's Play Area, MUGA, sports field, proposed new cemetery – owned by Meppershall Parish Council.
- Crackle Hill Extension – Owned by Meppershall Parish Council
- Polehanger Farm Woodland (Informal Open Space with permissive access) – owned by Polehanger Farms Ltd.
- Old Road Meadow - Nature Reserve, community orchard and children's play area – owned by Meppershall Parish Council.
- Fildyke Road Amenity Space
- Wry Close Allotments – owned by Meppershall Parish Council

10.4. CBC's Recreation Strategy identified that there are few deficiencies of open space types for Meppershall although there are insufficient large informal recreation opportunities. The Parish Council have identified a number of improvements and further provision, and will work with developers to ensure their implementation. E.g.: Developers of 59 Shefford Road are liaising with the Parish Council on the adoption of the new green open space on site.

10.5. New development must provide local open space and recreation facilities as required by the Local Plan and when opportunities emerge.

Policy GSR2: Existing Open Spaces

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

Policy GSR3: Open space provision as part of new development

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

- **Housing schemes of 5 units or more should include open space for recreation and wildlife.**
- **Efforts should be made to develop green corridors between the village and the countryside;**
- **Developments should incorporate tree and shrub planting.**

Developers must liaise with the Parish Council to achieve the best outcome for new and existing residents in terms of recreation provision. The provision of new community green spaces owned by the Parish Council will be encouraged. Suitable arrangements must be incorporated for the costs of future maintenance of these spaces.

11. Housing

- 11.1. Meppershall was, until recently, a typical Bedfordshire village comprising of a mixture of housing of various types and ages, ranging from Victorian terraced cottages to detached houses set in reasonable sized gardens. The predominant house types are detached (53%) and semi-detached, 3 or 4 bedroomed houses (28%) arranged in small developments. There are very few terraced homes, flats or maisonettes (18%). 82% of the homes are owner occupied, with the remainder rented. (2011 census).
- 11.2. Meppershall needs more young people and families remaining in or moving into the village for the community to retain its age balance but, the current shortage of affordable housing denies young people and families the opportunity to live in the village where they grew up. Current housing developments located at 32 Shefford Road and 59 Shefford Road are providing 35% affordable housing (equal to 71 new homes). This is a large number of housing which goes a long way to meeting the demand for local people with links to the village/area to be able to access affordable homes. It is therefore unlikely that there will be the need for any more local demand for the life of this plan.
- 11.3. The village needs smaller homes for elderly residents wishing to downsize and remain in Meppershall and for young singles or couples to take up residence.
- 11.4. The following issues were raised through consultation:
 - Considered redevelopment: residents strongly indicate the desire to maintain the village feel and to protect the surrounding countryside.
 - Proportionate development: generally, an average of 6 to 10 new houses per year was perceived as acceptable, and villagers feel very strongly that Meppershall is providing much more than its fair share of new homes when compared to other Central Bedfordshire locations.
 - Appropriate development: respondents want new housing to respond to local needs. For example, many voiced comments about the lack of affordable housing for young adults and first-time buyers.
 - Most respondents to the Village Plan also agree with the national principal of “presuming in favour of sustainable development”, but express strong concerns about how sustainability is analysed and defined.
 - In addition, 70% of residents would prefer to see multiple new sites, each with a few houses, rather than a few new sites, each with many houses.
 - 88% of Village Plan respondents say their dwelling meets their current needs, and 71% think that it will continue to do so over the next ten years.
 - 29% of Village Plan respondents would like to move away from the village in the next ten years.
- 11.5. Meppershall average house prices over a 12 month period to 31st January 2021 are 57.6% above the average for England and 35.0% above Bedfordshire’s average (£420,212 Meppershall v’s £266,532 England and £311,107 Bedfordshire – data from Rightmove and HM Land Registry). Only 8.32% of Meppershall homes are classed as Council Tax Band A and B with 19.74% in Band C (data correct 31/03/2021). This clearly shows an imbalance, and lack of choice for cheaper homes to buy in Meppershall. This indicates that young people

who have grown up in the village may be forced to seek housing elsewhere, where it is cheaper and more plentiful.

- 11.6. There are some village properties suitable for first time buyers, but many young buyers are unable to obtain mortgages and the properties do not meet the criteria for older buyers downsizing. This is evidenced by the number of people in the 15-24 and 45-64 age groups moving out of Meppershall far outweighing those moving in within those age groups.
- 11.7. At the other end of the spectrum, older residents are living in accommodation which is too big for them. They are unable to move because of the lack of suitable smaller houses or bungalows that meet their needs.
- 11.8. The proportion of older people (65+) in the population overall will rise. Forecasts for national demographic change between 2008 and 2033 show that the elderly population could increase from 16% to 23% of the total population. The age profile comparison between 2001 and 2011 shows a rise in Meppershall's elderly population from 254 to 300, 16.4% to 17.1% of total Meppershall population. Whilst over the same time period the percentage of under 17's has decreased from 23.4% in 2001 to 21.7%. One person households have increased from 101 households 17.4% of total households to 160, 23.5%. (Source Census information)



FIGURE 19: ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE STUDENTS OF MEPPERSHALL CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY



FIGURE 20: HIGH STREET COTTAGES



FIGURE 21: MARYWELLS



FIGURE 22: RECTORY ROAD



FIGURE 23: RECTORY ROAD

- 11.9. Meppershall has grown by nearly 160 dwellings since the 2011 Census (693 dwellings in 2011 and 853 in March 2021 – data from Central Bedfordshire Council), the highest number being constructed was 78 in 2018/19 as part of the Croudace Homes development which includes Walnut Tree Way.
- 11.10. A further 243 houses have been given planning permission and are either under construction or not yet started (as at 31st March 2021). The largest site that has been given outline planning permission is at 59 Shefford Road for 145 dwellings, with a further site at 32 Shefford Road is for 60 dwellings. The latter development is an allocated site in the emerging Local Plan as reference HAS39. The remainder are small sites or individual houses, including three developments on Fildyke Road and one on the High Street, amongst other smaller developments.

Housing mix

- 11.11. The provision of additional houses in Meppershall gives an opportunity to change the balance of village homes available. A good mix of dwellings is required, including fewer large homes and smaller affordable dwellings; the mix should also include some homes suitable for older residents who wish to downsize and some starter homes. Bungalows would be welcomed, as would apartments, provided that they are not higher than the predominant 2 storeys in the village whilst adhering to the character of the village.
- 11.12. Units likely to be suitable for young families or older people should be built to 'The Lifetime Homes' standards which incorporate design criteria supporting the changing needs of individuals and families at different life stages allowing easier access and movement within the property and ensuring properties are suitable for young families or older people. The Lifetime Homes standard may be superseded by Building Regulations and Government standards, in which case the most up to date standards will apply.

Housing need

- 11.13. The proportion of new housing development which is required to be affordable is set by Central Bedfordshire Council. The Neighbourhood Plan requires proposals for new housing developments to conform to up to date CBC specifications, both in overall requirement and tenure mix. Affordable Housing in the parts of CBC is provided by Housing Associations.

- 11.14. CBC records (up to 6th April 2021) show there are 22 households currently resident in Meppershall parish waiting for affordable housing. In addition to these households, there are a further 628 households not currently resident in the parish on the waiting list stating Meppershall as a preference of location. The current lettings policy in place means that those in greatest housing need with a local connection to the whole of Central Bedfordshire have first refusal at occupying vacant houses that come up in Meppershall. Lettings will continue this way in the parish, so as to conform to Central Beds Allocations Policy. Current policy can be found at:
<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/housing/strategic/developments.aspx>.

Housing development within the Settlement Envelope.

- 11.15. Opportunities for new housing development are likely to continue to arise in Meppershall throughout the plan period. Meppershall is classified as a 'small village' within the Local Plan. The Settlement Envelope for Meppershall is defined in the Local Plan and separates the village from the surrounding countryside. Within Settlement Envelopes of Small Villages, development will be limited to infill development, small-scale employment uses, and community facilities according to Policy SP7 of the Local Plan.
- 11.16. New homes may be built on redeveloped sites or through infill development. Infill sites are defined as spaces between existing houses where new housing will repeat or respect the surrounding pattern of development. Generally, 'infill' sites can be acceptable for 1 to 2 new houses, provided that the amenities of the adjacent properties are not adversely affected and that the street scene and pattern of development remains appropriate to the rural character of the village.

Policy H1: Housing

New housing development should be located within the Settlement Envelope unless allocated in the Local Plan.

On larger developments (more than 5 houses) the sizes of dwellings should be mixed, with a larger proportion of smaller, more affordable homes to provide for younger people and older people wishing to downsize.

12. Design of new development

High Quality Design

- 12.1. 88% of Village Plan respondents thought it important that new houses built in Meppershall blend in with their surroundings. In addition, residents indicated a desire for a village style defined by spacious planning, be it green spaces, plot size or off-road parking, together with a variety of building materials and styles. There was a common aversion to suburban-style estate builds.
- 12.2. 70% of Village Plan respondents thought it important that new houses built in Meppershall be environmentally friendly. The use of renewable energy technologies, highly efficient insulation and sustainable water management were at the forefront of the desired green methods.
- 12.3. The NPPF and the Neighbourhood Plan recognises that well-designed buildings and places improve the quality of life, and that it is a core planning principle to secure good design. The Neighbourhood Plan wishes to reflect community opinion and aspirations and add a local dimension to the assessment of proposals for new housing by utilising the relevant principles from Building for Life 12 and other design standards. Good design is not just about appearance, but also functionality and the relationship to surroundings and it is not about copying past styles or preventing innovative modern design. The aim is to create site-specific creative design, which is contextual by referencing form and materials to surroundings. Development proposals should include a Design and Access Statement, or other written statement related to the scale and complexity of the scheme, which shows that the development has been designed to specifically relate to its setting. This is essential to ensure that the character of the village is protected, and its local distinctiveness is enhanced and reinforced.
- 12.4. In keeping with the Village Plan respondents' unanimous views about the style of new developments, the Neighbourhood Plan requires all developments, including alterations to existing buildings, to be sympathetic to the character and scale of surrounding buildings and landscape. The bulk, massing and cumulative visual impact of buildings are particularly important considerations at the periphery of the village where new buildings may be seen on the hilltop, to avoid a hard edge of development in this rural setting. Therefore, buildings of more than two storeys would not be appropriate given the existing characteristics of the village.
- 12.5. This policy sets a standard of design for all developments in the Parish to ensure proposals are well designed, reflect the distinctive character of the parish and create environments that are accessible to all members of the community. Detailed design should include consideration of security (especially for sightlines avoiding hidden corners) and to boundary treatments. Characteristics of urban developments should be avoided in the design of new developments in the Parish. These characteristics include but are not limited to; block paving of entire roads, over use of street furniture, suburban street lighting, stark boundary treatment, incongruous materials and house styles more characteristic of suburban than rural areas.

Policy DND1: Design of New development

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

All new development must respect the rural character of the parish and:

- Relate to the existing development pattern in terms of enclosure and definition of streets/spaces.
- Be of an appropriate scale and density in relation to its setting.
- New dwellings should not be more than 2 storeys in height.
- Use materials appropriate to the development's context.
- Be well integrated with the surroundings; reinforcing connections, taking opportunities to provide new ones.
- Provide convenient pedestrian/cyclist access to community services and facilities.
- Be of a design with a locally inspired character (e.g.: paving, fencing, hedging to front of properties).
- Take advantage of the local topography, landscape and water features, trees and plants, wildlife habitats, existing buildings and site orientation.
- Any existing mature trees and/or landscaping should be maintained and incorporated into the development scheme in such a way that their long-term survival can be assured.
- Retain existing hedgerows.
- New planting should not screen or hide new development, but help integration with the surrounding landscape. New trees and shrubs which are locally native will usually be easier to establish than non-native plants, and will be more in keeping with the character of the area.
- Respect views into/from the site to enable retention of rural character, particularly at the edges of the village.
- High fencing defining the boundaries of new housing developments adjoining the countryside should be avoided as they have a stark external appearance.
- Integrate car parking within landscaping so that it does not dominate the street.
- Provide appropriate infrastructure such as drainage including the incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems to manage surface water run-off and foul sewerage and make improvements where necessary.

13. Community Facilities

- 13.1. Although the Parish of Meppershall is relatively small with approx. 840 dwellings and about 1750 people (at 2011 census) it has minimal community, social and leisure assets both in terms of built facilities and groups, community organisations.
- 13.2. In terms of built community facilities, the village has a church and churchyard, a pre-school, a primary school, a village hall with café and social club, a bakery, a convenience store which includes a Post Office and a public house in the centre of the village together with another public house on the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- 13.3. The Sugar Loaf PH is in the heart of the village and is registered as an Asset of Community Value. The Airman Public House (PH) is on the outskirts of the village providing accommodation, food and drink.
- 13.4. The Parish is served by several community groups, many of which use the village hall for their meetings. The village hall has an organising committee and host numerous events each month, including a 7 day a week bar.
- 13.5. Meppershall Parish Council owns the Wry Close Allotment field, which comprises approximately 80 allotment plots of varying sizes in a five-acre field behind the High Street and Fildyke Road with private vehicular access. There are water standpipes available and a locked gate. Allotment holders are not just Meppershall residents, but some live in Shefford and other local villages. There are plans to improve security and provide additional facilities subject to funding. The allotments are highly valued by residents as a facility and have been particularly so in the recent restrictions imposed as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic.
- 13.6. Closure of the shop and pub, in the hub of the village, would result in more journeys out of the village. Accordingly, change of use, conversion or demolition of any of the facilities listed in the policy to a use which is not for the community will be strongly resisted unless a replacement would prove more suitable for the community. The applicant would need to put forward evidence that the existing use is no longer commercially viable and prove that a genuine and sustained attempt has been made to market the enterprise as a going concern for at least a year prior to any application.

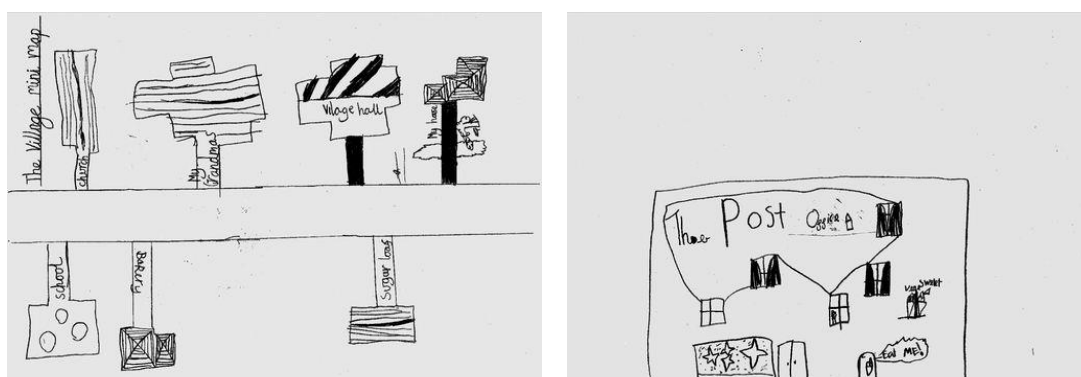


FIGURE 24: ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE STUDENTS OF MEPPERSHALL CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY



FIGURE 25: THE POST OFFICE



FIGURE 26: THE VILLAGE HALL

Policy CF1: Community facilities

Development proposals that will result in either the loss of or significant harm to a community facility will be strongly resisted, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that its continued use is no longer viable. This will require evidence that the property has been actively marketed, commensurate with its use at an open market value for a period of at least 12 months.

Facilities are:

- The Village Hall
- Village Shop
- Pub, in the heart of the village and on outskirts
- Church
- Bakery

Proposals to improve the viability of a community facility by way of the extension or partial replacement or redevelopment of buildings, structures and land, will be supported, provided the design of the scheme respects the village character in general, and the resulting increase in use is appropriate in design terms and will not have negative impact on the amenities of adjoining residential properties.

The provision of new community facilities will be encouraged.

14. Local Employment & Business

Local Businesses

- 14.1. Meppershall has a wide range of businesses either located or bordering the designated neighbourhood plan area, offering employment both to people living in Meppershall and in surrounding areas. These businesses vary in size and sector from the traditional rural sectors of agriculture to the latest in Information Technology.
- 14.2. Examples of local business types operating in Meppershall are:
 - Agriculture: Polehanger, Bury and Chapel Farms.
 - Building and Construction: ACO Technologies and a number of local builders.
 - Education: Meppershall Pre-school and Meppershall Academy.
 - Hospitality: Sugar Loaf Pub and Airman Hotel.
 - Residential Care: New Meppershall Care Home.
 - Retail: Post Office, Rogers Bakery, Creations Flowers & Hitchin Plumbing supplies.
 - Information Technology: Centrality and a number of small home-based companies.
 - Other: Brinkley Aircraft services (Meppershall Airfield) and multiple other smaller companies based from home including plumbers, garden maintenance and financial services.
 - Home working: Many people also work from home a varying number of days a week.
- 14.3. The businesses in Meppershall range from those employing 50+ employees (Centrality & ACO), to those operating with a smaller number but still significant (New Meppershall Care Home), self-employed and those working from home whilst working for large corporate organisations. These businesses are spread throughout the Neighbourhood Plan area with some being in the main development area of the village with others in Chapel Road and, like ACO technologies, on the outer edge.
- 14.4. Meppershall also has employment opportunities bordering the village, some examples are MBDA Systems (Large Defence Company), Wren Park Nursing Home, Oak Manor Care Home and businesses located in the surrounding business parks. The re-development of RAF Henlow also provides the possibility for future employment opportunities.
- 14.5. It is becoming increasingly important to reduce reliance on the car to travel to places of work; this is especially important in Meppershall due to the limited access to public transport. In order to support the local businesses, footpaths and cycle ways need to be utilised to link residential areas and businesses. An example would be ACO and Centrality: both are located away from the main residential area and village facilities yet there is no public footpath linking them to where people are living, so the car has to be relied upon for safe transport.
- 14.6. The agricultural and horticultural businesses, formerly of such significance to the village, have undergone major changes. The glasshouse nurseries and market gardens have all ceased commercial production, many have disappeared as housing growth has increased and only a few remain as unused sites. The mixed arable and livestock farming has also gone, with the land being given over almost entirely to cereal production, with almost all the farmland of the parish being managed by only three farm businesses. These changes have resulted in a huge reduction in employment prospects for parishioners within the parish and

have added further to the modern trend of travelling to work with the consequent increase in vehicle use.

- 14.7. IT infrastructure is also a major limitation; despite recent improvements to the internet connection many residents still complain that the internet is slow and unreliable. Meppershall needs high quality broadband for both residential and commercial properties throughout the village. Homeworking is a growing sector and among other benefits, reduces traffic however, it cannot be supported unless there is good broadband available.
- 14.8. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate employment sites, but it supports the viability of local businesses and their expansion, where this is proportionate and appropriate in the individual circumstances.



FIGURE 27: THE SUGAR LOAF, PUBLIC HOUSE



FIGURE 28: THE AIRMAN, PUBLIC HOUSE & HOTEL



FIGURE 29: ACO GREAT BRITAIN, NEXT TO THE AIRMAN LAKE



FIGURE 30: MEPPERSHALL CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

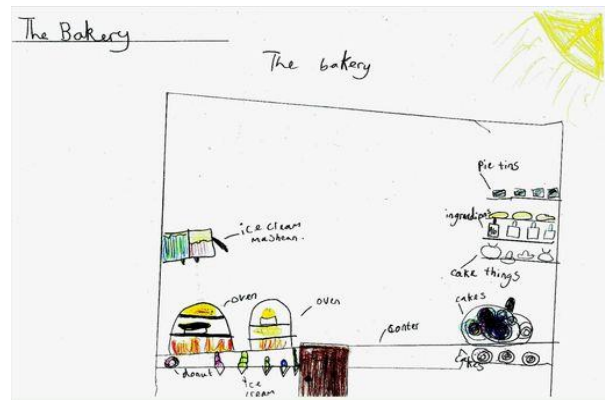
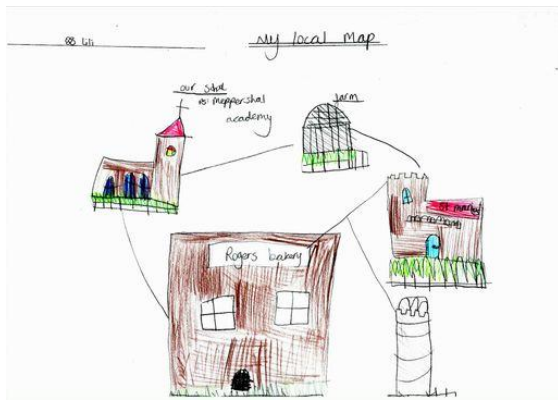


FIGURE 31: ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE STUDENTS OF MEPPERSHALL CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY



FIGURE 32: BRINKLEY'S FARMS



FIGURE 33: NEW MEPPERSHALL CARE HOME



FIGURE 34: ROGERS BAKERY



FIGURE 35: MEPPERSHALL AIRFIELD & BRINKLEY AIRCRAFT SERVICES

Policy LEB1: Supporting Local Employment and Businesses

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

- It can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impact from increased traffic, noise, smell, lighting, vibration or other emissions or activities arising from the proposed development.
- It would have an acceptable impact on the character and scale of the village, its rural hinterland and landscape; and,
- Where relevant, opportunities are taken to secure the re-use of vacant or redundant historic buildings as part of the development.

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

Proposals that provide access to a superfast broadband network to serve the village and properties adjoining the network in the countryside will be supported. New housing development should provide the necessary means for new residents to access the superfast broadband network and contribute to improvements in the service for existing residents and businesses.

15. Traffic and transport

- 15.1. Meppershall has access to the primary road network, being connected to the A507 to the north, and the village is connected to Shillington in the south and Shefford to the north. The settlement does not have a railway station, with the nearest station being in Arlesey, around 4 miles to the east. At present, there is little feasible alternative to the use of private cars for most trips in and out of the village, for leisure and work, as Meppershall has limited access to public transport. By encouraging the maximum use of walking and cycling for local journeys, this reliance on the car, particularly for single occupancy journeys, can be reduced to a certain extent. However, the pavement network and pedestrian crossings to local facilities will have to be improved.
- 15.2. The bus service within the village is barely adequate; a more frequent service would be recommended with the impending new developments, and if this is used, it could reduce the number of cars on the road reducing congestion and pollution. The bus service would also be the preferred option of many of the lesser-abled and elderly residents of the village, allowing them easy transport to the local area facilities. As an example, Hitchin is the largest town of any size close by and the number 89 bus, from Meppershall to Hitchin, currently runs three times a day, with the last departure to Hitchin leaving at 13:35. Similarly, the return route has three buses per day with the last returning bus departing Hitchin at 17:25. There are no buses to Hitchin on Sunday. Arlesey is the nearest station and there are currently no bus services to this location. Main bus services operate through Shefford to Bedford, Hitchin and Biggleswade requiring Meppershall passengers to travel to Shefford for any main destinations. Infrequent services are offered by Grant Palmer (Route 79/78 Luton-Shefford-Luton running through Meppershall) – first bus departure from Meppershall to Shefford 10:09am and last bus from Shefford to Meppershall at 16:26pm. Local not for profit services provided by Wanderbus's do not generally start until after 9:00am and are not daily therefore not used by commuters.
- 15.3. Meppershall lies within the Shefford Area Local Transport Plan (2013). The main issues that were identified were the pedestrian crossing points from Shefford Road over the A507, the parking outside the school and parking outside the shop.
- 15.4. New housing development will bring additional traffic movements to, from and through the village, with accompanying congestion and impact on the environment. However, new development can also provide opportunities to improve pedestrian and cycle links by linking new developments to existing facilities. Therefore, all developments which will increase traffic should be accompanied by a Transport Statement or Assessment and should include the following matters:
 - Road Safety and Parking, including the avoidance of congestion and excessive speed of vehicles.
 - A local focus on providing pedestrian and cycle links between new housing to the Village Hall, school, shop, recreation ground and nature reserve.
 - Developers should identify the realistic level of traffic their development will generate.
 - Development should provide information to potential householders about alternative transport modes to avoid additional car journeys.

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

Policy TT1: The traffic impact of new development

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

Where they are proposed, new roads, junctions, footpaths and traffic management measures should be designed to complement the rural character of the village and reflect local heritage.

Provision for cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders

- 15.6. Meppershall housing growth has outstripped the pedestrian infrastructure, which has not changed in decades. Improvements are needed, appropriate to the increased size of the village today, as well as for further housing increases over time. Cycleways need to be provided to link residential properties and services/facilities within the village, and new appropriate footpaths and cycleways should be created for entering and leaving the village. Some opportunities have been identified in the Green Infrastructure Plan.
- 15.7. New safe crossing points for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders should be considered, whilst retaining the essential rural character of the village.
- 15.8. There is a bridleway running from Hoo Road to Chapel Road/Hoo Farm where vehicle access has been restricted to improve safety for horse riders and pedestrians.
- 15.9. A partnership approach between the Parish Council, Central Bedfordshire Council and developers will be required to improve highway safety and minimise conflicts between road traffic, cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders. It is intended to support new ways of managing the traffic throughout the parish by promoting the safety of all road users and resident well-being through lower traffic speeds and traffic volumes.
- 15.10. Residents have frequently attended Parish Council meetings to comment on inappropriate vehicle speeds through the village. Together with the Parish Council, the local Speed Watch team have provided data on speeding traffic to Central Bedfordshire Council in order to evidence the requirement for speed management and intervention.



FIGURE 36: FOOTPATHS, TRAILS, BRIDLEWAYS AND PERMISSIVE PATHS

Policy TT2: Provision for pedestrians & cyclists

New development, including housing sites, must make provision (through Legal Agreements, planning conditions and funding) to focus on the highways most affected as a result of those developments. Such provision should be used to help fund schemes that reduce traffic speeds and volumes, improve the provision and connectivity of pavements and increase access for pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists.

New provision of footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths is encouraged, particularly those identified in the Green Infrastructure Plan.

Parking

- 15.11. It is important that the design of new housing development is not dominated by car parking but a failure to make proper provision can result in problems in terms of appearance and safety.
- 15.12. Car ownership levels in the parish are high (in the 2011 Census 50% of households had 2 or more vehicles compared to 46.7% in Central Bedfordshire and 32% in England), reflecting both the rural location and limited availability of public transport. Off-road parking is limited in the village and is a frequent source of frustration for residents, even on new

developments. Adherence to Central Bedfordshire Council's parking standards reflect these local factors and seeks to ensure that new development does not add to current levels of congestion.

- 15.13. In all parish surveys residents expressed strong concerns about traffic and transport issues and the impact on their well-being. They highlighted the dangers caused by on-street parking and risks to pedestrian and cyclist safety. The loss of any of the limited parking in the village could exacerbate these problems. This and other transport policies are intended to manage the impact of traffic arising from new development to improve the well-being of local residents.

Policy TT3: Car Parking

Proposals for new housing developments will provide parking in line with Central Bedfordshire's parking standards and have adequate on-site parking to meet current and future needs, unless alternative and accessible car parking arrangements can be made which do not add to on-street congestion.

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

16. Implementation and Monitoring

- 16.1. This section outlines the approach to the implementation of the Meppershall Neighbourhood Plan, including working in partnership, funding mechanisms, priority projects and monitoring/review. The approach will be that new development should be supported by the timely delivery of infrastructure, services and facilities necessary to provide a balanced, self-sufficient community.
- 16.2. The Neighbourhood Plan will be delivered and implemented over a long period and by different stakeholders and partners. Flexibility will be needed as new challenges and opportunities arise over the plan period.
- 16.3. The Plan will be used by the Parish Council to:
 - Guide comments on planning applications.
 - Negotiate with landowners and developers to achieve the best possible outcomes from new development.
 - Direct financial resources to the villages in a structured way.
 - Bring together groups or working parties to improve the local environment.
 - Lobby local authorities to support the parishioners wishes and aspirations.

Working in partnership

- 16.4. Meppershall Parish Council is committed to Localism and locally informed influence over planning decisions and it will be the key organisation in the implementation, monitoring and review of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Council will build upon its excellent track record in engaging in planning decisions (reactively through consultation and proactively through promoting the policies of this plan) and by delivering related projects for the local community. However, it is recognised that partnership working is needed for the potential of the plan to be realised. Partnership and joint working will be key elements in the successful implementation of the plan. The main organisations and the roles that they can play are summarised below:
 - **Central Bedfordshire Council** - Planning Policy, Development Control, Housing Management and Improvement, Economic Development, Open Spaces, Recreation and Community Facilities and unitary authority functions, including: Drainage, Highways and Transport, Education, Landscape and Social Services.
 - **Adjoining Parish Councils** – Assessing impact of large-scale planning applications and working together to deliver Green Infrastructure
 - **South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnerships (SEMLEP)** The LEP is a potential partner for joint working, funding and implementation and activity may be relevant to rural businesses.
 - **Environment Agency** The planning, design and delivery of development, taking account of: (1) Flood risk management; (2) Water quality and water resources, (3) Waste management, (4) Land contamination & soil and (5) Environmental permits and other regulation.
 - **Site owners and developers** will need to liaise with the Parish Council as well as the other agencies involved in development.

Funding and Implementation Mechanisms

- 16.5. Financial contributions will be sought from developers through Section 106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which provides a legal framework to raise funds to provide the infrastructure needed to cope with new developments. Central Bedfordshire is working on CIL at present and when it is introduced in the area, contributions will be sought as appropriate under CIL Regulations and the NPPF.
- 16.6. The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations of the 2011 Localism Act enable areas with a Neighbourhood Plan in place to receive at least 25% of the CIL raised in their area to direct to their own local infrastructure priorities. These contributions will be targeted on the priority need to deliver new community infrastructure. The Parish Council will encourage developers to use legally binding Unilateral Undertakings to commit the required level of funding to the provision of community infrastructure projects.
- 16.7. In addition, the Parish Council will seek to influence annual and other budget decisions by Central Bedfordshire Council on housing, open space and recreation, local business and economic development, community facilities and transport.
- 16.8. The Parish Council will also work with the appropriate agencies and organisations to develop funding bids to help to achieve Neighbourhood Plan policies and objectives and non-policy aspirations. This might include: The Lottery Fund; UK Government programmes; landfill tax credits and Local Enterprise Partnership funding.
- 16.9. The following table lists the Parish Council's aspirations for the Parish over the Neighbourhood Plan period.

Aspiration	Action
Invest in the current rural character of the village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourage landowners to create wildlife margins and corridors to encourage biodiversity of flora and fauna and wildlife on cropped land. ● Investigate creating natural gateways in approaches to villages through planting of local native species.
Increase leisure and green spaces improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Seek to Improve outdoor sports facilities by installing the following; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New outdoor gym equipment on Centenary Field. ○ New tennis / netball court on Centenary Field. ○ Team benches on sports field. ○ Walkway / running path around the sports pitch on Centenary Field ● Seek to improve accessibility to leisure and green spaces to a wider range of users including those with disabilities. ● Seek to extend / enlarge current green open spaces. ● Seek to improve security around the allotments by way of installation of security fencing and gates. ● Seek to improve children's play equipment for both juniors and infants on Centenary Field and Old Road Meadow. ● Improve informal open spaces by enhancing the following; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allotment irrigation system improvements. ○ Installation of an Eco Toilet at the allotments. ○ Installation of benches to Old Road Meadow, usable for all. ○ Installation of signage related to H&S and user knowledge.
Enhance accessibility (e.g.: signage, access, facilities) and Rights of Way links with surrounding Parishes and ROW, road networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Investigate better public accessibility, improving signage and increased community involvement. ● Designing and producing easily accessible printed and web-based material to encourage and educate about local facilities, right of way and conservation areas. ● Work with landowners and neighbouring Parish Councils in order to improve accessibility. ● Seek to create footpaths, permissive routes and cycleways that allow paths / cycleways linking to other parishes. ● Protection of Hoo Road Bridleway from vehicular traffic whilst considering the requirement of landowners and utility companies. ● Work with landowners and CBC to create a safe pedestrian and cycle route from Meppershall to Shefford.

Support local business and Invest in latest technology to bring 'best in class' connectivity to the village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support businesses that wish to expand into new areas of business and encourage networking and the promotion of local goods and services. • Work with the local authorities to seek to improve the internet connection to the village so that it can support both private and business usage. Identify the key improvements required. • Seek to improve mobile phone signal coverage in the parish, including the latest 5G technology and future potential improvements. • Explore options for networking between small and larger businesses for the sharing of experience and good practice.
Traffic and Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with CBC in order to improve traffic calming measures whilst retaining the rural character of the village and considering prospective developments.
Protect community asset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify all community assets as per the Localism Act 2011 and seek to protect assets or land which are mainly used for social, well-being or social interest.
Local Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with CBC and Historic England to explore the development of a Local List for Meppershall to include buildings noted as historically important in the Neighbourhood Plan engagement process, identified by local residents, and also those appearing in the Heritage Gateway list. • Identify and list all buildings and structures of character not currently listed. Consult with the owners about inclusion in a Local List for Meppershall. • Seek to Implement a blue plaque scheme in Meppershall, identify buildings with notable history and install blue plaques where possible. Investigate better public accessibility, improving signage and increased community involvement, in engaging with and promoting historic asset preservation. • Designing and producing easily accessible printed and web-based material to encourage understanding of the importance of local history. • Developers should liaise with Meppershall Parish Council to ensure, wherever possible, that street names acknowledge and reflect local history and personages.
Improve green credentials including transport, housing and energy generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore possibilities for community energy generation in the village, for example solar, wind, hydro, biomass, anaerobic digestion. Explore further local interest and willingness of landowners, Meppershall Village Hall and local businesses to support. Consider commissioning a scoping study and explore investment opportunities. • Work with CBC to make sure that future developments are in line with the latest green housing standards. • Investigate carrying out a green infrastructure survey for the village in order to identify future investments such as electric vehicle charging points.

17. Monitoring and Review

- 17.1. It is important to check that progress is made towards meeting the objectives and policies of the Plan. The Parish Council will report on the implementation of the Plan every 3 years and consider:
- How progress is being made to achieve the vision and the objectives of the Plan.
 - How progress is being made towards the implementation of the policies in the Plan.
 - What financial contributions, available to the community, arising from developments have been targeted towards identified plans and projects and how these have been used.
 - If the Plan remains based on the most up to date information.
 - How the Plan is being taken into account by Central Bedfordshire Council when determining planning applications.
- 17.2. These periodic reviews will allow the Parish Council to conclude if a formal review needs to take place. If so, it will secure the opinions of residents and stakeholders to update the Plan.

18. Vision, Objective, Sustainable Development Principles and Policies Summary

Vision

Our vision for Meppershall is to enhance the rural character of the Parish whilst maintaining the hilltop aspect and linear nature of the village. A variety of homes will be provided on small scale developments to accommodate residents through all stages of life. Green spaces and biodiversity will be protected and enhanced to promote wellbeing in the community. Local services, community facilities and businesses will be supported to ensure that the village and its residents flourish.

Objectives

1. The rural character of the Parish will be maintained, ensuring that the scale and design of development is in keeping with the rural setting.
2. The attractiveness of the landscape views and the rich ecological biodiversity will be maintained and enhanced.
3. The historic character of the village will be retained, including the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and their settings and the historic landscape.
4. Promote and inform residents and visitors of the rich heritage of the village and its offerings
5. The green spaces within and around the village will be easily accessible and ecologically diverse and green corridors will be enhanced. New green spaces will be provided and protected in the future.
6. New housing will provide for the needs of the local area with the emphasis on providing smaller homes for younger people and older people who may wish to downsize.
7. New housing will be designed to a high quality, the form and bulk of buildings respecting the rural setting particularly at the periphery of the settlement.
8. Community facilities and retail outlets will be supported and enhanced to ensure the village can service the community's needs locally and sustainably.
9. Existing local recreation facilities will be protected and improved and opportunities for enhanced sport and recreation will be supported.
10. Home working and the re-use of brownfield land for business purposes will be encouraged and existing businesses including agriculture in the Parish will be supported to retain local employment opportunities
11. The reliance on cars, particularly single occupancy journeys, will be reduced by improving walking and cycling access within the village and to local services and to improve both road and pedestrian safety throughout the village. The use of public transport will be encouraged.

Sustainable Development Principles

Sustainable development for Meppershall means that development should be:

- At an appropriate scale and in locations where it would support the community.
- Of a high standard of design, reflecting the character of the surroundings.
- Contributing towards community infrastructure and supporting community cohesion.
- Providing superfast broadband (fibre optic) connections, or whatever may supersede fibre optic.
- Meeting contemporary construction, energy efficiency and water management standards.
- Located and designed to enable safe walking and cycling to local services and facilities, preferably within a 500m radius of those locations.

The following adverse impacts must be avoided:

- The loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.
- The loss or inappropriate diversion of public rights of way.
- Avoidable intrusion into open countryside.
- The loss of or damage to wildlife habitats and hedgerows and trees.
- A loss of amenity for existing residential properties and reduced efficiency for nearby businesses.
- Overloading existing utilities and services (water, drainage, sewage and waste).

Policy Number	Description
RC1: Rural character	<p>The rural character of the village and its surroundings should be respected through new development by ensuring that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scale and character of new buildings are modest and in keeping with the rural setting. • New buildings respect the hilltop position of Meppershall and are sympathetic to the contours of the land by ensuring that building heights, roofscapes and massing do not dominate the skyline. • The sense of space between and around existing buildings is retained where appropriate, particularly where views of the countryside beyond the village are available. The design of new buildings should ensure that adequate space is provided around them to compliment the rural character of the village. • Boundary treatment and landscaping schemes are carefully designed so as to prevent undue urbanisation of the location.
NE1: Protecting the Landscape	<p>Any proposals for development in the rural parts of the Parish should recognise and seek to protect and enhance the historic and natural landscape and local character of the Parish.</p>

	<p>Development which would impact on the skyline must be in keeping with adjacent development and not introduce over-dominant features either on the skyline or cascading downslope or upslope.</p> <p>Field patterns and elements of the landscape heritage of the area, including ridge and furrow, field ponds, mature trees and historic hedgerows should be protected and incorporated into any landscape design schemes and their long-term maintenance ensured.</p> <p>For every tree felled to make way for a new development, it must be replaced by 2 new trees planted on either Meppershall Parish Council Land, on local Meppershall farm land or on the development itself. The developer will be expected to pay a contribution towards the upkeep.</p>
NE2: Nature Conservation	<p>New development will be required to protect and enhance existing natural features of sites, enhance biodiversity. All development should provide a net biodiversity gain of 10% as set out in the Environment Bill 2019 (or as superseded).</p> <p>Provision of appropriate species-related measures will be required, including, for example, swift bricks, bat and owl boxes and the incorporation of native species into landscaping schemes.</p> <p>Opportunities should also be taken by developers and landowners to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create new and link areas of existing biodiversity value to create more robust networks, especially woodlands, grasslands and hedgerows. • Link sustainable drainage solutions in new development to complement nature conservation objectives.
HE1: Protecting and enhancing local heritage assets	<p>All development proposals affecting identified local heritage assets will be required to take into account the character, context and setting of the assets.</p> <p>Because of the evidence of settlement since prehistoric times, developers must undertake investigation to any proposed site in order to ensure that valuable archaeological artefacts and records are not lost.</p> <p>Development should be designed taking account of local styles, materials and detail. The loss of, or substantial harm, to a local asset, will be resisted unless exceptional circumstance is demonstrated.</p>
GSR1: Local Green Spaces	<p>The following areas shown on the Policies Map are designated as Local Green Spaces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centenary Field • Nunswood • Old Road Meadow • Sandy View woodland • Land surrounding St Mary's Church and Manor House • Polehanger Farm River Woodland • Wry Close Allotments

	<p>Development will be resisted in the Local Green Spaces to protect their special character and contribution to the Parish unless very special circumstances are demonstrated.</p> <p>Development which would result in the loss of the potential Local Green Spaces at Old Road Meadow (extension) and Taylor's Close Greenspace shall be strongly resisted.</p>
GSR2: Existing Open Spaces	<p>Existing open spaces and recreation facilities will be protected from development. Proposals which would reduce the quality or quantity of these facilities will only be permitted where the existing facilities are replaced to a better quality or quantity in an appropriate location.</p>
GSR3: Open space provision as part of new development	<p>Open space should normally be provided within new development to accord with the standards set by Central Bedfordshire in the Local Plan and the following criteria should be met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing schemes of 5 units or more should include open space for recreation and wildlife. • Efforts should be made to develop green corridors between the village and the countryside; • Developments should incorporate tree and shrub planting. <p>Developers must liaise with the Parish Council to achieve the best outcome for new and existing residents in terms of recreation provision. Suitable arrangements must be incorporated for the costs of future maintenance of these spaces.</p>
H1: Housing	<p>New housing development should be located within the Settlement Envelope unless allocated in the Local Plan.</p> <p>On larger developments (more than 5 houses) the sizes of dwellings should be mixed, with a larger proportion of smaller, more affordable homes to provide for younger people and older people wishing to downsize</p>
DND1: Design of New development	<p>Proposals for good quality new development (including new buildings and extensions to existing buildings) will be supported, where they address the following criteria.</p> <p>All new development must respect the rural character of the parish and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relate to the existing development pattern in terms of enclosure and definition of streets/spaces. • Be of an appropriate scale and density in relation to its setting. • New dwellings should not be more than 2 storeys in height. • Use materials appropriate to the development's context. • Be well integrated with the surroundings; reinforcing connections, taking opportunities to provide new ones. • Provide convenient pedestrian/cyclist access to community services and facilities. • Be of a design with a locally inspired character (paving, fencing, hedging to front of properties). • Take advantage of the local topography, landscape and water features, trees and plants, wildlife habitats, existing buildings and site orientation. • Any existing mature trees and/or landscaping should be maintained and incorporated into the development scheme in such a way that their long-term survival can be assured.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New planting should not screen or hide new development, but help integration with the surrounding landscape. New trees and shrubs which are locally native will usually be easier to establish than non-native plants, and will be more in keeping with the character of the area. • Respect views into/from the site to enable retention of rural character, particularly at the edges of the village. • High fencing defining the boundaries of new housing developments adjoining the countryside should be avoided as they have a stark external appearance. • Integrate car parking within landscaping so that it does not dominate the street. • Provide appropriate infrastructure such as drainage including the incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems to manage surface water run-off and foul sewerage and make improvements where necessary.
CF1: Community facilities	<p>Development proposals that will result in either the loss of or significant harm to a community facility will be strongly resisted, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that its continued use is no longer viable. This will require evidence that the property has been actively marketed, commensurate with its use at an open market value for a period of at least 12 months. Facilities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Village Hall • Village Shop • Pub, in the heart of the village and on outskirts • Church • Bakery <p>Proposals to improve the viability of a community facility by way of the extension or partial replacement or redevelopment of buildings, structures and land, will be supported, provided the design of the scheme respects the village character in general, and the resulting increase in use is appropriate in design terms and will not have negative impact on the amenities of adjoining residential properties.</p> <p>The provision of new community facilities will be encouraged.</p>
LEB1: Supporting Local Employment and Businesses	<p>Proposals for the development of new small businesses and for the expansion or diversification of existing businesses, including agricultural, horticultural and farm-based operations, will be encouraged, providing that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impact from increased traffic, noise, smell, lighting, vibration or other emissions or activities arising from the proposed development. • It would have an acceptable impact on the character and scale of the village, its rural hinterland and landscape; and, • Where relevant, opportunities are taken to secure the re-use of vacant or redundant historic buildings as part of the development. <p>Applications for extensions or part change of use of dwellings to enable flexible or home working within the development boundary will be supported, subject to there being appropriate parking and that the residential amenity of neighbouring properties is maintained.</p> <p>Proposals that provide access to a superfast broadband network to serve the village and properties adjoining the network in the countryside will be supported. New housing development should provide the necessary means for new residents to</p>

	access the superfast broadband network and contribute to improvements in the service for existing residents and businesses.
TT1: The traffic impact of new development	<p>Proposed developments that would generate a significant amount of movement or would potentially affect a known traffic hazard should be supported by realistic measures to maintain and improve highway safety as well as avoiding vehicular/pedestrian conflict. Where appropriate it may be necessary to consider off site measures where these are required to accommodate the traffic impact of the scheme.</p> <p>Where they are proposed, new roads, junctions, footpaths and traffic management measures should be designed to complement the rural character of the village and reflect local heritage</p>
TT2: Provision for pedestrians & cyclists	<p>New development, including housing sites, must make provision (through Legal Agreements, planning conditions and funding) to focus on the highways most affected as a result of those developments. Such provision should be used to help fund schemes that reduce traffic speeds and volumes, improve the provision and connectivity of pavements and increase access for pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists.</p> <p>New provision of footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths is encouraged, particularly those identified in the Green Infrastructure Plan.</p>
TT3: Car Parking	<p>Proposals for new housing developments will provide parking in line with Central Bedfordshire's parking standards and have adequate on-site parking to meet current and future needs, unless alternative and accessible car parking arrangements can be made which do not add to on-street congestion.</p> <p>New development should not result in the loss of publicly accessible off-street car parking. Developments which propose to remove off-road parking spaces will only be supported where alternative provision is made which increases or maintains the number of accessible parking spaces available on or within the immediate vicinity of the site. Proposals for new development that provide additional off-road car parking spaces to alleviate parking congestion, will be encouraged.</p>

19. Appendices

Bus Timetables (current)

Centrebus Hitchin to Henlow Camp via Meppershall – 89

Monday to Friday

Ref.No.: 19TT

	NBH	NBH	NBH	NBH	NBH	NBH	Sch	SH	NBH	R NBH
Hitchin, Wilbury Way Ind Est	0850	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1705	1832
Grove Road, Woolgrove Rd	0852	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Hitchin, Rail Station	1539B	1555	1722	1839
Hitchin, Bancroft	0715	0900	0940	1155	1235	1415	1555	1558	1725	1842
The Priory School, Grounds	1601	.....	.....	.....
Holwell Turn	0723	.....	0948	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Holwell Turn	0908	.....	1203	1243	1423	1606	1606	1733	1850
Holwell, Church	0911	.....	1206	1246	1426	1609	1609	1736	1853
Pirton, Motte & Bailey	0917	.....	1213	1252	1433	1615	1615	1742	1859
Shillington, Post Office	1258	.....	1621	1621	1748	.....
Shillington, Bury End	1302	.....	1625	1625	1752	.....
Meppershall, Sugar Loaf	1308	.....	1631	1631	1758	.....
Lower Stondon, School	1314	.....	1637	1637	1804	.....
Henlow Camp, Bird in Hand	1316	.....	1639	1639	1806	.....
Henlow Camp, Bird in Hand	0727	.....	0952	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

SH - School Holidays
 B - via Hollow Lane (for Girls School)
 Sch - School days Only
 R - Continues to Shillington & Meppershall at request of passengers already on-board
 NBH - Not on Bank Holidays

	NBH	SH	Sch	NBH	NBH	NBH	NBH	NBH	NBH	NBH
Henlow Camp, Bird in Hand	.....	0729	0727	.....	0952	.....	1327	.....	.....	.....
Henlow Camp, Bird in Hand	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1641	1808
Lower Stondon, School	.....	0732	0730	.....	0954	.....	1329	.....	.....	.....
Meppershall, Sugar Loaf	0636	0738	0736	.....	1000	.....	1335	.....	.....	.....
Shillington, Bury End	0642	0744	0742	.....	1006	.....	1341	.....	.....	.....
Shillington, Post Office	0646	0748	0747	.....	1010	.....	1345	.....	.....	.....
Pirton, Motte & Bailey	0654	0756	0755	0918	1018	1213	1353	1433	.....	.....
Holwell, Church	0658	0802	0805	0924	1024	1219	1359	1439	.....	.....
Holwell Turn	0703	0805	0809	0927	1027	1222	1402	1442	1645	1812
Hitchin Bancroft	.....	0812	0825	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1653	1820
Hitchin, Rail Station	0710	0815	0835B	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Hitchin, Bancroft	0713	.....	.....	0935	1035	1230	1410	1450	.....	.....
Grove Road, Woolgrove Rd	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1658	1825
Hitchin, Wilbury Way Ind Est	.....	0821	0841	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1700	1827

SH - School Holidays
 B - via Hollow Lane (for Girls School)
 Sch - School days Only
 NBH - Not on Bank Holidays

Saturdays

Ref.No.: 1902

Hitchin, Bancroft	0900	0940	1155	1235	1415	1615	1715
Holwell Turn	0908	0948	1203	1243	1423	1623	1723
Holwell, Church	0911	.....	1206	1246	1426	1626	1726
Pirton, Motte & Bailey	0918	.....	1213	1252	1433	1632	1732
Shillington, Post Office	.....	.....	.....	1258	.....	1638	1738
Shillington, Bury End	.....	.....	.....	1302	.....	1642	1742
Meppershall, Sugar Loaf	.....	.....	.....	1308	.....	1648	1748
Lower Stondon, School	.....	.....	.....	1314	.....	1654	1754
Henlow Camp, Bird in Hand	.....	.....	.....	1316	.....	1656	1756
Henlow Camp, Bird in Hand	.....	0952	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

Henlow Camp, Bird in Hand	0807	.....	0952	.....	1327	.....	.....
Henlow Camp, Bird in Hand	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1656
Lower Stondon, School	0809	.....	0954	.....	1329	.....	.....
Meppershall, Sugar Loaf	0815	.....	1000	.....	1335	.....	.....
Shillington, Bury End	0821	.....	1006	.....	1341	.....	.....
Shillington, Post Office	0825	.....	1010	.....	1345	.....	.....
Pirton, Motte & Bailey	0833	0918	1018	1213	1353	1433	.....
Holwell, Church	0839	0924	1024	1219	1359	1439	.....
Holwell Turn	0842	0927	1027	1222	1402	1442	1700
Hitchin Bancroft	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1708
Hitchin, Bancroft	0850	0935	1035	1230	1410	1450	.....

Grant Palmer Luton to Shefford via Meppershall – 78/79

	78	79	78	79	79	79
Luton Interchange, Stand 12	0826	0926	1156	1256	1526	1726
Bushmead, Furze Close	-	-	1206	-	-	-
Warden Hil, Great Bramingham Lane	0838	0938	1211	1308	1538	1738
Streatley, Village Hall	0842	0942	1215	1312	1542	1742
Upper Sundon, Methodist Church	0846	-	1219	-	-	-
Lower Sundon, Church Road	0849	-	1222	-	-	-
Barton-Le-Clay, The Bull	-	0947	-	1317	1547	1747
Barton-Le-Clay, Windsor Parade	-	0949	-	1319	1549	1749
Higham Gobion, St Margaret's Church	-	0952	-	1322	1552	1752
Shillington, Post Office	-	0958	-	1328	1558	1758
Shillington, Hillfoot End	-	1004	-	1334	1604	1804
Meppershall, Post Office	-	1009	-	1339	1609	1809
Shefford High Street	-	1014	-	1344	1614	1814
	79	78	79	78	79	79
Shefford High Street	0718	-	1020	-	1350	1620
Meppershall, Post Office	0723	-	1025	-	1355	1625
Shillington, Hillfoot End	0728	-	1030	-	1400	1630
Shillington, Post Office	0734	-	1036	-	1406	1636
Higham Gobion, St Margaret's Church	0740	-	1042	-	1412	1642
Barton-Le-Clay, Windsor Parade	0743	-	1045	-	1415	1645
Barton-Le-Clay, The Bull	0746	-	1048	-	1418	1648
Upper Sundon, Methodist Church	-	0846	-	1219	-	-
Lower Sundon, Church Road	-	0849	-	1222	-	-
Streatley, Village Hall	0751	0853	1053	1226	1423	1653
Warden Hill, Turnpike Drive	0801	0858	1058	1231	1428	1658
Bushmead, Furze Close	-	0900	-	-	-	-
Luton Interchange, Stand 12	0820	0915	1110	1243	1440	1710

Listed Buildings in Meppershall

Name and Location	Heritage Category	Grade	List Entry Number
WOODHALL FARMHOUSE,	Listing	II	1113843
BARN FORMING SOUTHERN HALF OF EAST SIDE OF YARD, 50 METRES EAST OF POLEHANGER FARMHOUSE	Listing	II	1113844
ST THOMAS' CHAPEL APPROXIMATELY 20 METRES SOUTH OF CHAPEL FARMHOUSE, CHAPEL ROAD	Listing	II*	1113845
RECTORY COTTAGE, 10 AND 12, RECTORY ROAD	Listing	II	1113846
THE HOLLIES, 2, SHILLINGTON ROAD	Listing	II	1113847
FOWLER'S FARMHOUSE, 26 AND 28, HIGH STREET	Listing	II	1136904
MONKS POOL, RECTORY ROAD	Listing	II	1136920
CHAPEL FARMHOUSE, CHAPEL ROAD	Listing	II	1312576
CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, CHURCH ROAD	Listing	II*	1312589
BARN, FORMING NORTHERN HALF OF EAST SIDE OF YARD, 50 METRES EAST OF POLEHANGER FARMHOUSE	Listing	II	1312611
RANGE OF BARNS FORMING SOUTH SIDE OF YARD, 30 METRES EAST OF POLEHANGER FARMHOUSE	Listing	II	1321778
MANOR HOUSE, CHURCH ROAD	Listing	II	1321779
MANOR FARM, 62, HIGH STREET	Listing	II	1387316
'THE HILLS' MOTTE & BAILEYS	Scheduling		1010370

Source: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/advanced-search-results>

Accompanying Documents

Consultation Statement and Annexes as follows:

Number	Document	Description
Annex – 001A	Meppershall Village Plan 2017-2027	Full report from the village plan published in 2017 which includes survey results and supporting publications
Annex – 001B	Meppershall Village Plan 2017-2027 Questionnaires	Original questionnaires
Annex – 001C	Meppershall Village Plan 2017-2027 Questionnaire Data	Questionnaire data
Annex - 002	Meppershall Green Infrastructure Plan 2020	Green infrastructure plan including the supporting surveys and publications
Annex - 003	Village MeppFest	Summary, photos and survey results from the village event held at Meppershall Academy in 2018
Annex – 004	Communications Summary	A summary of publications and communications on the Neighbourhood Plan
Annex - 005	Steering Group Meeting Minutes and Parish Council Reports	Steering group meeting agendas and minutes & Parish Council Reports