

Living Networks

Meppershall Parish

Green Infrastructure Plan

2020



Meppershall Parish
Council



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MEPPERSHALL PARISH GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

Introduction

The Meppershall Parish Green Infrastructure (GI) Plan is one of more than 40 parish and town GI plans to have been produced across Bedfordshire.

The production of the Parish GI Plan has been funded by Meppershall Parish Council / Meppershall Neighbourhood Plan Group and facilitated by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC).

The production of the GI Plan was requested by Meppershall Parish Council and the Meppershall Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group; both to be a valuable tool in its own right as a planning document, and to inform policies and objectives in the emerging Meppershall Neighbourhood Plan. This plan is a revised and updated plan, based on the original Meppershall GI Plan produced in 2011. The 2011 GI Plan map and table of aspirations is included as Appendix A at the end of this plan.

BRCC was appointed to facilitate the production of this Plan as it is a charity that works with local communities and landowners to conserve and enhance the landscape, wildlife and history in this area. At the heart of BRCC's work is the belief that the best results are achieved by empowering local communities, giving them a say in issues that affect them. BRCC has over 60 years' experience of community development support and facilitating community consultation; and has nearly 20 years' experience of planning and delivering green infrastructure projects in Bedfordshire.

The need for GI Planning has been identified at all levels, from central government, through regional bodies (the East of England Regional Spatial Strategy and the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy), to County and District levels. The Bedfordshire and Luton Strategic GI Plan was produced in 2007 by the Bedfordshire & Luton Green Infrastructure Consortium. Parish and Town GI Plans are a valuable tool for planners, committees, developers and communities themselves. They can help inform important decisions and help local people identify what is important to them, and what they would like to happen in the future. Parish and Town GI Plans have been used to support funding bids, helping people make important improvements to their local environment, and they also provide a snapshot of the local environment.

It should be acknowledged that not all of the aspirations identified will be delivered, because there are many other influencing factors, such as the views of landowners, existing planning permissions and allocations, potential future land use allocations and the cost of implementation. The value of this GI plan lies in the fact that it has been produced by local residents for their own community. It can help inform planning decisions and be used as a mechanism to identify where financial benefits from development should be directed. It cannot be used as a tool to prevent development but may influence considerations in the planning process. All aspirations which gained community support have been included; however, it remains a community owned document which, while endorsed by CBC, has not been formally adopted. The plan as a whole is based on a robust approach to mapping and implementing a high quality GI network for the existing, and future, residents of the parish of Meppershall.

Context

Meppershall is a small rural parish with a linear hilltop aspect and is surrounded by arable farmland. Shefford is 1.5Km north of Meppershall, and the villages of Campton, Shillington, Lower and Upper Stondon and Henlow are all within a similar distance.

To the south of the village is St Mary's church which lies within a conservation area comprising the old Manor House, a thatched cottage and a nature area. There is also a small former chapel with Norman features located on Chapel Farm. Village facilities include a village school, a pub, bakery and Post Office/shop, as well as a village hall.

Meppershall is located in an area deficient in designated outdoor spaces, such as Country Parks, Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace and Amenity Greenspace provision, although there are a number of footpaths crossing the surrounding farmland. Despite this, the parish is biodiverse with badgers, muntjac deer, several species of bat, red kite, woodpeckers and other common birds. Meppershall's ancient woodland Nunswood is also home to Bedfordshire's largest rookery. There is also a "woodland trail" (Polehanger Farm River Woodland) generously provided and maintained by a local landowner adjoining the River Ivel where it passes by the parish boundary.

For centuries the parish industry has been primarily an agricultural one. A great deal of farmland surrounds the village, consisting of Grade 1 and 2 soils. In the past there were a significant number of glasshouse nurseries and smallholdings, but the glasshouses are now mainly disused and deteriorating, no longer viewed as viable businesses.

ACO Technologies plc is the single larger employer in the parish with over 200 employees. Their site is on the very edge of the parish, separated from the village by farmland. There are several other small business and industrial units on the edge of the village in former farm buildings, consisting mainly of businesses with less than 5 employees; car workshops, florists etc. There are also many self-employed people operating from home.

In 2019, the parish of Meppershall was made up of approximately 813 dwellings, the majority situated in the village, with several outlying farmhouses. The population of Meppershall parish was approximately 1500 adults (on electoral roll). In common with other settlements in Central Bedfordshire, Meppershall is experiencing housing growth; in Meppershall's case much of this is down to new large housing developments, building on old nursey land and infill development. The growth rate exceeds 10% annually. Currently approved, but not completed, are over 220 additional homes.

Endorsements

Endorsement by Meppershall Parish Council:

Meppershall Parish Council is happy to endorse this Green Infrastructure Plan, which has been produced by current residents of the parish, for this and future generations. In endorsing this Plan, the Parish Council confirms its support for the concept of GI Planning and the methodology used to produce the Plan. In addition, the Parish Council will seek to be an active partner in the delivery of this Plan, leading and assisting the implementation of those actions which fall into the remit and plans of the Council.

The Parish Council will regularly review the Plan, reporting to the community activity undertaken and planned, both by the Council and others, towards implementing the Plan.

Endorsement by Meppershall Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group:

Meppershall Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is pleased to endorse this Green Infrastructure Plan. It has been produced using an agreed and well developed process involving current residents in a series of focussed working groups. As such it represents their more detailed views on how the issues previously identified can be addressed in the future. It sets a clear plan for the future that will be supported by Local Planning Policies in the forthcoming Meppershall Neighbourhood Plan.

Support from Central Bedfordshire Council:

Central Bedfordshire Council recognises the need to provide a framework for green infrastructure provision in the District to meet the needs of existing and new residents and help create sustainable communities. In 2008, Mid Beds District Council produced a district-wide GI plan which has informed the Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy and other Local Development Documents. The production of this parish-level GI Plan for Meppershall gives added detail and together with the views of local people adds value to, and compliments, the Mid Beds District GI Plan and the Strategic GI Plan for Bedfordshire and Luton which was produced in 2007. All levels of GI Plan, including this Meppershall GI Plan, will be used by the Authority in considering development proposals and assisting with the creation of green infrastructure assets.

Support from BRCC:

BRCC will support the community of Meppershall in implementing this Plan where appropriate and feasible, providing advice, support in securing funding and leading practical works.

Definition of Green Infrastructure

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
- a sustainable future

Green Infrastructure assets include:

- Accessible green space
- Country parks
- Green corridors
- Urban parks and gardens
- Habitats for wildlife including nature reserves, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and County Wildlife Sites.
- Historic parks and gardens and historic landscapes
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Waterways and water bodies, including flooded quarries
- Public rights of way and cycleways
- Allotments
- Children's play space
- Formal sports facilities
- Cemeteries

It is important to plan the GI network in the same way that we plan other networks and facilities, so that we can safeguard and enhance the environment and meet the needs of a wide range of people, both now and in the future. Green infrastructure also provides social and economic benefits, including:

- Places that can be used as a focus for community activity and events
- Opportunities to keep fit and healthy
- Helps support the local economy, including village shops, pubs and B&Bs
- Links between town and country helping people in rural areas to access facilities
- Helps reduce the use of cars

Green Infrastructure Themes

Green Infrastructure is composed of 5 themes; landscape, history, biodiversity, access and open space. These themes are presented separately to enable the different elements of GI to be considered both individually in detail and as part of the integrated GI network.

Aims of this Plan

To identify the key existing natural, historic, cultural and landscape assets, accessible greenspace and rights of way and to plan new features that will provide a connected network of green infrastructure for the benefit of present and future generations.

Objectives

To create a comprehensive document that will assist the local community to:

- Protect and where possible enhance the landscape, biodiversity and the historic environment
- Improve access and links for people and wildlife
- Provide a multi-functional green infrastructure network
- Provide a source of information and guidance for planners, landowners and developers in formulating land use plans
- Promote community involvement
- Identify projects and produce an action plan to implement projects.

Links to other GI related plans

The Bedfordshire & Luton Strategic Green Infrastructure Plan

The Bedfordshire & Luton Strategic Green Infrastructure Plan (2007) identifies a broad, spatial vision for green infrastructure across the area and highlights 11 strategic GI corridors across the county. The parish of Meppershall lies within the Ivel River Valley Corridor.

The Mid Bedfordshire GI Plan

The Mid Bedfordshire GI Plan (2008) identifies a network for protecting and enhancing GI across the whole of the former Mid Beds District. This Network is broken down into a series of six 'areas', with Meppershall lying in the Ivel Valley.

CBC Leisure Strategy

In March 2014 Central Bedfordshire Council adopted its Leisure Strategy, which comprises three facility-based chapters and replaces the 2008 PPG17 Study. Chapter 2: the Recreation and Open Space Strategy, focuses on the provision of nine types of open space, which are:

- Countryside Recreation
- Urban Parks
- Informal Recreation
- Large Formal Recreation Areas
- Small Amenity Spaces
- Facilities for Children
- Facilities for Young People
- Allotments
- Cemeteries & Burial Grounds

Chapter 2 assessed the current provision of each of the nine open space types and, utilising national guidance and local requirements, it established a set of local standards to guide future provision of open space on both a strategic and local level in Central Bedfordshire.

To define open space provision on a parish level, a Parish Schedule has been created for each parish in Central Bedfordshire. It identifies current provision, shortfalls or surpluses against the local standards and priorities.

Based on national standards for levels of provision; the CBC figures for 2017 indicate that across the parish of Meppershall there is no existing provision with regards to urban parks, and a deficiency in countryside recreation sites, large formal recreation areas and facilities for young people.

There is good quality provision of small amenity spaces centrally, though a lack of provision to the south of the parish. There is also a good distribution of 'above standard' play areas for children.

The parish has a surplus of large informal recreation areas, though there are access issues and a lack of recreational infrastructure at these sites.

The Leisure Strategy for Meppershall refers to the earlier Green Infrastructure Plan and includes in its key priorities:

- Creation of a new countryside recreation site
- Improved recreational function and access to informal open spaces
- Enhanced play facilities at Gregory Close.
- Cemetery extension

Methodology & Community Involvement

A methodology for the production of Parish Green Infrastructure Plans was developed in 2007 and 2008 by the PGIP Working Group and endorsed by the Beds & Luton Green Infrastructure Consortium (now the Beds & Luton Local Nature Partnership). This standard methodology has been used to produce 40 parish-level GI Plans across Bedfordshire.

This Plan is an update to Meppershall's 2011 GI Plan rather than an entirely new Plan, and the community's previous aspirations have formed the basis for the new consultation process.

A community workshop was held on 23 January 2019, to which local stakeholders and the wider community were invited to view and comment on the aspirations resulting from the original Plan, at Appendix 2. Consultees were asked to use this information to identify their aspirations for enhancing and adding to the existing local GI, by annotating a Workshop Map (Appendix 2), which summarised the main features of the original map pack.

The attendee numbers at the workshop are noted below, broken down into their gender, age and length of residence in the parish.

The 'gender' breakdown of attendees at the January workshop:

Male	Female	Total
25	24	49

The 'age' breakdown of attendees at the January workshop:

Under 18		18-24		25-44		45 -59		60-74		75+		Total
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
1	1	0	1	1	1	7	8	12	9	4	4	49

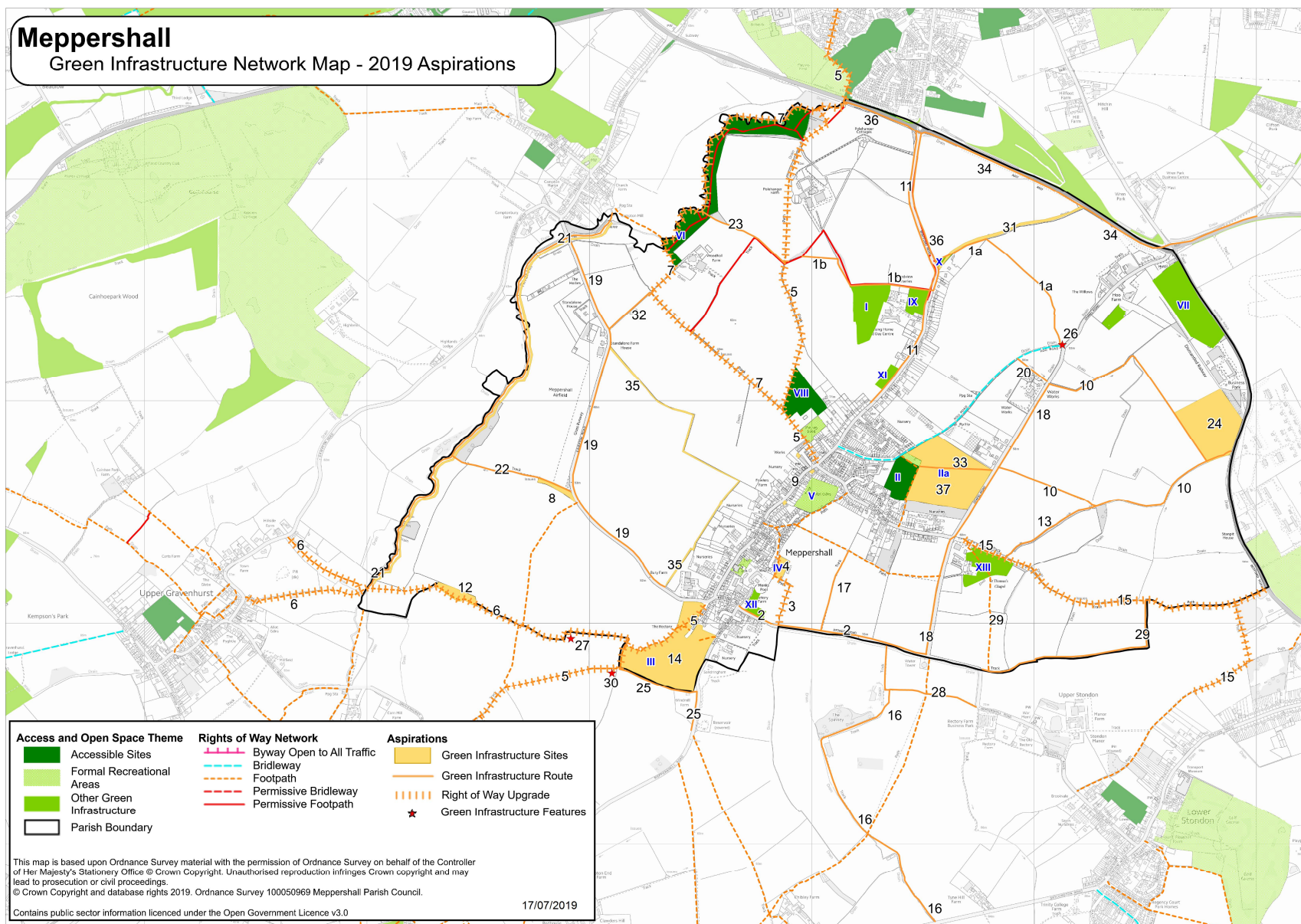
The 'length of residence' breakdown of attendees at the January workshop:

<1 year		1-5 yrs		6-10 yrs		11-25 yrs		>25 yrs		Total
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
2	2	1	4	1	2	13	11	8	5	49

The resulting GI aspirations list noted at the January workshop - along with the attendees' choices of 'most important green spaces' - were then compiled and distributed as a postal questionnaire (see Appendix 3). This was sent - in March / April 2019 - to every home in the parish, in order to provide all residents with the opportunity to be involved in the consultation process. See Appendix 4 for the postal questionnaire results.

The following '2019 Aspirations' map and associated tables display those aspirations that were brought forward from Meppershall's 2011 Green Infrastructure Plan and identified as important in the 2019 Plan.

The parish's green spaces are also shown - indicated on the map by blue Roman numerals and described in the table at page 13.



Meppershall Aspirations, Views and Green Spaces tables (2019)

The numbering below refers to sites, features and routes on the previous map

Aspirations Identified in Meppershall GI Plan 2019	
1a	Create new footpath from junction of Chapel Road / Hoo Road bridleway to Shefford Road (to link with Aspiration 1b).
1b	Upgrade permissive footpath to formal RoW from Shefford Road to link to Aspiration 1a, and linking with current RoW's (and Aspiration 5) south of Polehanger Farm.
2	Create new footpath (along Stondon Road).
3	Clear and restore overgrown footpath (north of Stondon Road).
4	Create new woodland close to eastern end of Taylors Close.
5	Upgrade particular sections of John Bunyan Trail - where route becomes footpath from Shefford through Meppershall - to cycleway /bridleway.
6	Upgrade existing footpath to cycle track to give route through Upper Gravenhurst to Wrest Park.
7	Upgrade footpath to cycle track to give access to nature area along river.
8	Create/enhance woodland from river alongside current track / proposed footpath (Aspiration 22).
9	Create central community garden/ meeting/ resting place for the community (location to be determined).
10	Make existing track accessible to the general public as circular walk (east of Chapel Road).
11	Create cycleway alongside Shefford Road.
12	Increase woodland from river towards St Mary's Church.
13	Create new footpath linking Aspirations 10 and 15.
14	Protect conservation area near St Mary's Church which includes church land, meadow, manor, earthworks, west side of Church Road, Monk's Pool, west side of Shillington Road.
15	Upgrade existing footpath to cycleway to give route to Stondon (east of Chapel Road, and partly outside parish).
16	Create cycleway from Stondon Road to Shillington Road. (Outside of parish)
17	Create new access from Stondon Road northwards to Meppershall.

18	Create new cycleway from water tower (Stondon Road) to waterworks (Chapel Road).
19	Create new bridleway alongside Campton Road linking Meppershall to Campton.
20	Create footpath from Hoo Road bridleway to Chapel Road (near waterworks).
21	Enhance green corridor along river from Cow Bridge (Upper Gravenhurst) to Campton, providing RoW access – possibly a cycleway - and habitat improvement.
22	Create footpath access from Campton Road to river.
23	Provide footpath link from track between Village Hall and Polehanger Farm (see Aspiration 5) heading towards river and continuing across to connect with upgrade by Woodhall Farm (Aspiration 7).
24	Create new woodland south west of ACO Business Park.
25	Link footpath from reservoir (outside Parish) across to Aspiration 5 (new access).
26	Install access barrier to prevent unofficial vehicular access.
27	Provide seat to enjoy extensive views from church along path towards Gravenhurst. Precise location to be determined.
28	Provide access along farm track from Rectory Farm to join with Aspiration 16. (Outside of parish)
29	Provide access path to link Aspiration 15 to Stondon Road.
30	Provide seat on path (Aspiration 5) at church end of village. Precise location to be determined.
31	Create woodland corridor along existing ditch/drain between Woodview Nurseries and towards Wren Park.
32	Create bridleway to link track (see Aspiration 7) with Campton Road and other footpaths.
33	Create footpath across Aspiration 37 to link Old Road Meadow to Chapel Road.
34	Create new cycle path alongside main road to Arlesey.
35	Widen hedge to create woodland green corridor (west of village).
36	Upgrade permissive route towards Shefford to RoW and extend to A507 underpass.
37	Create new woodland to extend and enhance Old Road Meadow.

Views identified as important and in need of preserving	
A	Preserve views to Biggleswade (from Stondon Road).
B	Preserve southward views to Sharpenhoe Clappers (from Stondon Road).
C	Preserve views of open areas and Campton.
D	Preserve views towards Gravenhurst and Chicksands from recreation area.
E	Preserve view towards Nuns Wood.
F	Preserve view towards Great Hill (beyond Shefford) from junction of proposed footpath (Aspiration 1) and Nuns Wood.
G	Preserve views towards Campton and Chicksands.
H	Preserve views toward Chiltern Hills, from near reservoir at church end of village. (Outside of Parish)

Green Spaces	
I	Nunswood
II	Old Road Meadow
Ila	Aspiration 37, extension to Old Road Meadow
III	St Mary's Church, Manor House and Mott and Bailey
IV	Taylor's Close Greenspace
V	Wry Close Allotments
VI	The Polehanger Farm River Woodland ('River Hit Woodland')
VII	The Old Brick Pits
VIII	Centenary Field
IX	Sandy View Woodland
X	The Spinney
XI	Green space area by Shefford Road
XII	Green space at Rectory Farm
XIII	Green space around chapel at Chapel Farm

NOTE

Where future built developments are proposed on land where GI aspirations have been identified, consideration should be given as to whether the aspiration(s) can be delivered either as part of a potential built development, or whether an alternative location for the aspiration(s) can be found. Such developments may contribute, either financially or through direct works, to the implementation of GI aspirations.

Prioritisation Survey

An integral part of the Meppershall Green Infrastructure Plan was a postal / email survey that was sent to all residents of the parish. Residents were asked to rank the five aspirations and the five greenspaces – developed at the January workshop - which are most important to them. The responses generated were then scored as follows:

The most important (i.e. ranked first by residents) aspirations / greenspaces were given five points, the second most important received four points and so on to one point for the fifth most important.

763 surveys were distributed, to all residencies in the parish. There were 132 returned questionnaires, 112 by post and 20 by email - which equates to just over 17% of residencies.

The top priorities for aspirations / greenspaces / are displayed in table form below. The complete tables are shown at Appendix 4.

Aspiration Priorities – most important aspirations (from postal survey)

Priority Ranking	Aspiration Reference	Priority Aspirations as identified by Survey Respondents
1st	14	Protect conservation area near St Mary's Church which includes church land, meadow, manor, earthworks, west side of Church Road, Monk's Pool, west side of Shillington Road.
2nd	37	Create new woodland to extend and enhance Old Road Meadow.
3rd	9	Create central community garden/ meeting/ resting place for the community (location to be determined).
4th	10	Make existing track accessible to the general public as circular walk (east of Chapel Road).
5th	26	Install access barrier to prevent unofficial vehicular access.
6th	2	Create new footpath (along Stondon Road).
7th	34	Create new cycle path alongside main road to Arlesey.

Green Space Priorities – most important green spaces (from postal survey)

Priority Ranking	Greenspace Reference	Priority Green Spaces as identified by Survey Respondents
1	II	Old Road Meadow
2	III	St Mary's Church, Manor House and Mott and Bailey
3	I	Nunswood
4	V	Wry Close Allotments
5	VIII	Centenary Field
6	Ila	Aspiration 37 - extension to Old Road Meadow
7	VI	The Polehanger Farm River Woodland
8	IX	Sandy View Woodland
= 9	IV	Taylor's Close Greenspace
= 9	XI	Green space area by Shefford Road

NOTE

The 2020 GI map and green spaces table show one (additional) site that was not included in the 2011 GI Plan. This is the 'Green space area by Shefford Road' which was newly identified during the 2019 consultation process.

See Appendix 4 for full details of respondent voting.

Local Green Space Designation

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. A new designation to protect local green areas of particular importance to local communities has been introduced. The Local Green Space designation will allow communities to identify and protect areas that are of value to the community through local and neighbourhood plans.

The designation should only be used:

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

In addition to the prioritisation of the complete set of aspirations, a further over-arching priority agreed at the workshop was to propose that the Meppershall Neighbourhood Plan seeks Local Green Space (LGS) designation on the parish's most important green spaces.

The Meppershall Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is encouraged to assess the above sites against the LGS criteria and where appropriate to seek LGS designation.

The following LGS assessment has been undertaken using a pilot exercise being developed by GI Planning practitioners in Bedfordshire. The assessment tool has been developed (using local experience in Bedfordshire and best practice from elsewhere in the country) as a methodology for identifying spaces suitable for designation as Local Green Spaces (LGS) according to the criteria set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and subsequent Government guidance (Planning Practice Guidance: Local Green Space designation).

Stage 1 Assessment

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

The following table provides information on the ten most important sites from the longer list displayed at page 12. These priorities were selected by local residents via the survey at Appendix 3.

Site	Current Planning Permission?	Allocated for Development?	Already Designated?	Pass to Stage 2?
Aspiration 37 – extension to Old Road Meadow	N	N	N	Y
Centenary Field	N	N	N	Y
Green space by Shefford Road	Y (CB/19/00259/OUT)	N	N	N
Nunswood	N	N	N	Y
Old Road Meadow	N	N	N	Y
Sandy View Woodland	N	N	N	Y
Land surrounding St Mary's Church and Manor House	N	N	N	Y
Taylor's Close Greenspace	N	N	N	Y
The Polehanger Farm River Woodland	N	N	N	Y
Wry Close Allotments	N	N	N	Y

Stage 2 Assessment

Site	Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ locally significant	Recommend for Designation?
1. Aspiration 37 – extension to Old Road Meadow	Y	Y	N	Defer for possible future designation [1]
2. Centenary Field	Y	Y	Y	Y
3. Nunswood	Y	Y	Y	Y
4. Old Road Meadow	Y	Y	Y	Y
5. Sandy View Woodland	Y	Y	N	N
6. Land surrounding St Mary's Church and Manor House	Y	Y	Y	Y
7. Taylor's Close Greenspace	Y	Y	N	Defer for possible future designation [2]
8. The Polehanger Farm River Woodland	Y	Y	Y	Y
9. Wry Close Allotments	Y	Y	Y	Y

[1] This area is currently not a 'green space', but an arable field. The Meppershall Green Infrastructure Plan has identified this field as an aspirational extension to the adjacent Old Road Meadow. Should this extension occur, then the extended area would meet LGS designation criteria and should be designated under a future review of the Neighbourhood Plan.

[2] This area is considered to not meet the LGS designation criteria currently. However, it has the potential to meet the criteria in the future if the community choose to enhance it, possibly as a pocket-park. Should this occur, then the enhanced site would meet LGS designation criteria and should be designated under a future review of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Detailed discussion of each individual site can be found at Appendix 1.

Meppershall Green Infrastructure Plan Action Plan

[1] Lead Partner	Organisation / individual taking the lead in the planning and implementation of the aspiration (See key below table)
[2] Other Partners	Other organisations to be involved in the planning and implementation of the aspiration
[3] Resourcing	Likely level of funding needed: Low (achievable with no or minimal funding), Medium (achievable with moderate new funding), High (achievable with significant new funding)
[4] Timescale	Likely date of implementation: Short 2020-22; Medium 2023-25; Long 2026+

MPC Meppershall Parish Council
 CBC Central Bedfordshire Council
 BRCC Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity

MNPSG Meppershall Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
 LO Landowner

Ref	Aspiration	Possible Lead Partner [1]	Other Partners [2]	Resourcing [3]	Timescale [4]	Next Steps
1a	Create new footpath from junction of Chapel Road / Hoo Road bridleway to Shefford Road (to link with Aspiration 1b).	PC/ MNPSG	CBC	M	M	Liaise with LO
1b	Upgrade permissive footpath to formal RoW from Shefford Road to link to Aspiration 1a, and linking with current RoW's (and Aspiration 5) south of Polehanger Farm	PC/MNPSG	LO CBC	M	M	Liaise with LO, CBC
2	Create new footpath (along Stondon Road).	PC/ MNPSG	CBC LO	M	M	Liaise with LO, CBC
3	Clear and restore overgrown footpath (north of Stondon Road).	PC/ MNPSG	CBC	L	S	Group / PC action

Ref	Aspiration	Possible Lead Partner [1]	Other Partners [2]	Resourcing [3]	Timescale [4]	Next Steps
4	Create new woodland close to eastern end of Taylors Close.	PC/ MNPSG	LO	L-M	M	Liaise with LO
5	Upgrade particular sections of John Bunyan Trail - where route becomes footpath from Shefford through Meppershall - to cycleway /bridleway.	PC/ MNPSG	CBC LO's	M-H	L	Liaise with CBC and LO's
6	Upgrade existing footpath to cycle track to give route through Upper Gravenhurst to Wrest Park.	PC/ MNPSG	CBC LO Gravenhurst PC	M-H	L	Liaise with CBC and LO's
7	Upgrade footpath to cycle track to give access to nature area along river.	PC/ MNPSG	CBC LO	M-H	L	Liaise with CBC and LO
8	Create/enhance woodland from river alongside current track / proposed footpath (Aspiration 22).	PC/ MNPSG	LO	M	M-L	Liaise with LO
9	Create central community garden/ meeting/ resting place for the community – location to be determined.	PC/ MNPSG				
10	Make existing track accessible to the general public as circular walk (east of Chapel Road).	PC/ MNPSG	LO	L	L-M	Liaise with LO
11	Create cycleway alongside Shefford Road.	PC/ MNPSG	CBC LO	M-H	L	Liaise with CBC and LO
12	Increase woodland from river towards St Mary's Church.	PC/ MNPSG	LO	M	M-L	Liaise with LO
13	Create new footpath linking Aspirations 10 and 15.	PC/ MNPSG	CBC LO	M	L	Liaise with CBC and LO

Ref	Aspiration	Possible Lead Partner [1]	Other Partners [2]	Resourcing [3]	Timescale [4]	Next Steps
14	Protect conservation area near St Mary's Church which includes church land, meadow, manor, earthworks, west side of Church Road, Monk's Pool, west side of Shillington Road.	PC/ MNPSG	LO	L	S-L	Ongoing
15	Upgrade existing footpath to cycleway to give route to Stondon (east of Chapel Road, and partly outside parish).	PC/ MNPSG	CBC Stondon PC	M-H	L	Liaise with Stondon PC and CBC
16	Create cycleway from Stondon Road to Shillington Road. (Outside of parish)	PC/ MNPSG	CBC Stondon PC	M-H	M-L	Liaise with Stondon PC and CBC
17	Create new access from Stondon Road northwards to Meppershall.	PC/ MNPSG	LO	L	LM	Liaise with LO re. permissive path
18	Create new cycleway from water tower (Stondon Road) to waterworks (Chapel Road).	PC/ MNPSG	CBC LO	M-H	L	Liaise with CBC and LO
19	Create new bridleway alongside Campton Road linking Meppershall to Campton.	PC/ MNPSG	CBC LO	M-H	L	Liaise with CBC and LO
20	Create footpath from Hoo Road bridleway to Chapel Road (near waterworks).	PC/ MNPSG	CBC LO	M	M	Liaise with CBC and LO
21	Enhance green corridor along river from Cow Bridge (Upper Gravenhurst) to Campton, providing RoW access – possibly a cycleway - and habitat improvement.	PC/ MNPSG	LO	H	L	Liaise with LO
22	Create footpath access from Campton Road to river.	PC/ MNPSG	CBC LO	M	M	Liaise with CBC and LO

Ref	Aspiration	Possible Lead Partner [1]	Other Partners [2]	Resourcing [3]	Timescale [4]	Next Steps
23	Provide footpath link from track between Village Hall and Polehanger Farm (see Aspiration 5) heading towards river and continuing across to connect with upgrade by Woodhall Farm (Aspiration 7).	PC/ MNPSG	LO	M	M	Liaise with LO
24	Create new woodland south west of ACO Business Park.	PC/ MNPSG	LO	H	L	Liaise with LO
25	Link footpath from reservoir (outside Parish) across to Aspiration 5 (new access).	PC/ MNPSG	Shillington PC	M	M	Liaise with Shillington PC
26	Install access barrier to prevent unofficial vehicular access.	PC/ MNPSG	CBC LO	L-M	M	Liaise with CBC and LO
27	Provide seat to enjoy extensive views from church along path towards Gravenhurst. Precise location to be determined.	PC/ MNPSG	CBC LO	L	S	Liaise with CBC and LO
28	Provide access along farm track from Rectory Farm to join with Aspiration16. (Outside of parish)	PC/ MNPSG	LO Stondon PC	M	M	Liaise re. permissive path
29	Provide access path to link Aspiration15 to Stondon Road.	PC/ MNPSG	LO	M	M-L	Liaise with LO
30	Provide seat on path (Aspiration 5) at church end of village. Precise location to be determined.	PC/ MNPSG	CBC LO	L	S	Liaise with CBC and LO
31	Create woodland corridor along existing ditch/drain between Woodview Nurseries and towards Wren Park.	PC/ MNPSG	LO	M-H	L	Liaise with LO
32	Create bridleway to link track (see Aspiration 7) with Campton Road and other footpaths.	PC/ MNPSG	CBC LO	M	M	Liaise with CBC and LO

Ref	Aspiration	Possible Lead Partner [1]	Other Partners [2]	Resourcing [3]	Timescale [4]	Next Steps
33	Create footpath across Aspiration 37 to link Old Road Meadow to Chapel Road.	PC/ MNPSG	CBC LO	M	M	Liaise with CBC and LO
34	Create new cycle path alongside main road (A507) to Arlesey.	PC/ MNPSG	CBC LO	H	L	Liaise with CBC and LO
35	Widen hedge to create woodland green corridor (west of village).	PC/ MNPSG	LO	H	L	Liaise with LO
36	Upgrade permissive route towards Shefford to RoW and extend to A507 underpass.	PC/ MNPSG	CBC LO	H	L	Liaise with CBC and LO
37	Create new woodland to extend and enhance Old Road Meadow.	PC/ MNPSG	LO	H	L	Liaise with LO

Proposed Local Green Space Designations for Meppershall



**This report is an assessment of sites identified, by the local community, in the
Meppershall Green Infrastructure Plan to be considered for
Local Green Space Designation within the Meppershall Neighbourhood Plan**



June 2020

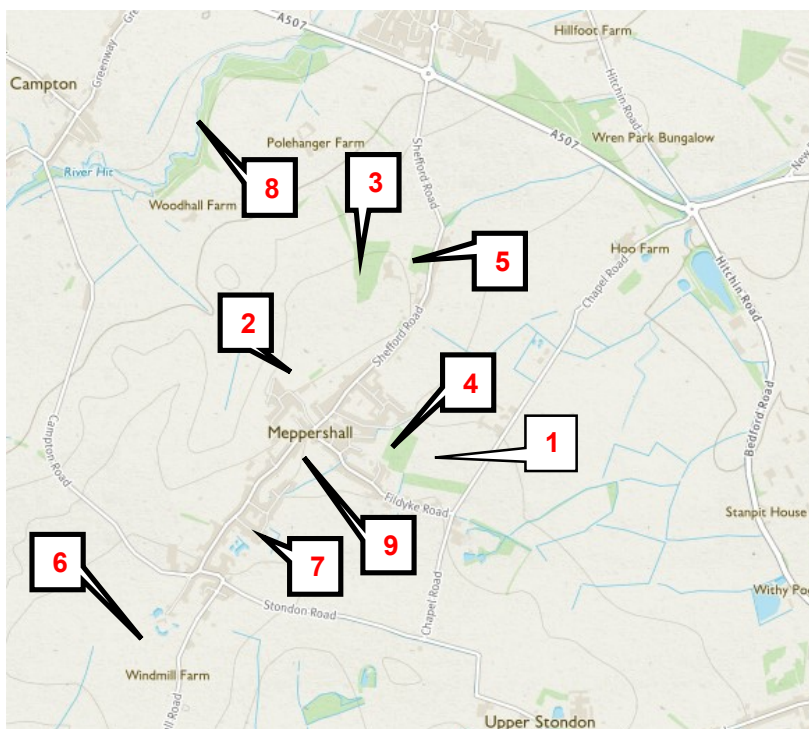
MEPPERSHALL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – LGS ASSESSMENT

Stage 1 Assessment

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

Site	Current Planning Permission?	Allocated for Development?	Already Designated?	Pass to Stage 2?
Aspiration 37 – extension to Old Road Meadow	N	N	N	Y
Centenary Field	N	N	N	Y
Green space by Shefford Road	Y (CB/19/00259/OUT)	N	N	N
Nunswood	N	N	N	Y
Old Road Meadow	N	N	N	Y
Sandy View Woodland	N	N	N	Y
Land surrounding St Mary's Church and Manor House	N	N	N	Y
Taylor's Close Greenspace	N	N	N	Y
The Polehanger Farm River Woodland	N	N	N	Y
Wry Close Allotments	N	N	N	Y

Possible LGS's – to undergo stage 2 assessment



Site numbers relate to the table on the previous page.

See individual site assessments for detailed locations/ boundaries.

Stage 2 Assessment – Overall Summary

Site	Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ locally significant	Recommend for Designation?
10. Aspiration 37 – extension to Old Road Meadow	Y	Y	N	Defer for possible future designation [1]
11. Centenary Field	Y	Y	Y	Y
12. Nunswood	Y	Y	Y	Y
13. Old Road Meadow	Y	Y	Y	Y
14. Sandy View Woodland	Y	Y	N	N
15. Land surrounding St Mary's Church and Manor House	Y	Y	Y	Y
16. Taylor's Close Greenspace	Y	Y	N	Defer for possible future designation [2]
17. The Polehanger Farm River Woodland	Y	Y	Y	Y
18. Wry Close Allotments	Y	Y	Y	Y

[1] This area is currently not a 'green space', but an arable field. The Meppershall Green Infrastructure Plan has identified this field as an aspirational extension to the adjacent Old Road Meadow. Should this extension occur, then the extended area would meet LGS designation criteria and should be designated under a future review of the Neighbourhood Plan.

[2] This area is considered to not meet the LGS designation criteria currently. However, it has the potential to meet the criteria in the future if the community choose to enhance it, possibly as a pocket-park. Should this occur, then the enhanced site would meet LGS designation criteria and should be designated under a future review of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The above Stage 2 assessment has been undertaken by BRCC to determining which sites identified by the community as important - and that progressed through the Stage 1 assessment – do meet the LGS designation criteria.

Stage 2 Assessment – Individual Site Assessments


The Stage 2 assessment assesses whether the proposed LGS meets the following criteria:


1. The space is not an extensive tract of land and is local in character
2. The space is within close proximity of the community it serves
3. The space is demonstrably special to the local community and holds particular local significance.

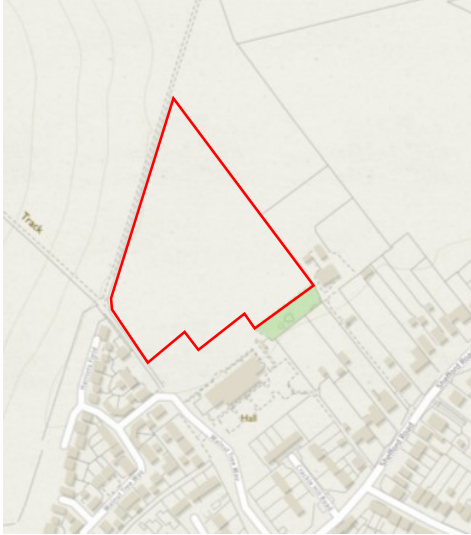
The 3rd of these criteria is sub-divided into:


- a. The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its beauty
- b. The proposed space is of particular local historic significance
- c. The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its recreational value
- d. The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its tranquillity
- e. The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its wildlife
- f. The proposed space is of particular local significance for another reason


To meet the Stage 2 assessment criteria, a space has to fulfil criteria 1 and 2; and at least 1 a-f components of criteria 3.


Site Name	Aspiration 37 – extension to Old Road Meadow
Site Map	
Site Area	7.65 ha
Site Location	This site is located to the west of Old Road Meadow, between Hoo Road and Chapel Road. The site is within 600m of the centre of the village (junction of High St & Fildyke Rd).
Site Description	<p>The site is currently an arable field, although it has been identified in the Meppershall GI Plan 2019 as an aspirational extension to the Old Road Meadow community green space.</p> <p>Beauty</p> <p>As an arable field, the aesthetics of the site changes with the seasons.</p> <p>Historical Significance</p> <p>Lying to the village side of the Chapel Baulk (village boundary) now represented by Chapel Road and adjacent to the hamlet of Fildyke End this was probably part of the medieval great field known as Bandland.</p> <p>Tranquillity</p> <p>With its village setting and only quiet roads nearby, the site is tranquil.</p> <p>Wildlife</p> <p>As an arable field, the site as a whole, has relatively low wildlife value. The Southern and Western boundaries of the field are formed of mature hedges which will provide habitat for many invertebrate and small bird species.</p> <p>Significant for another reason</p> <p>This area would provide a natural extension to the already well-established wildlife and recreational area of Old Road Meadow.</p>

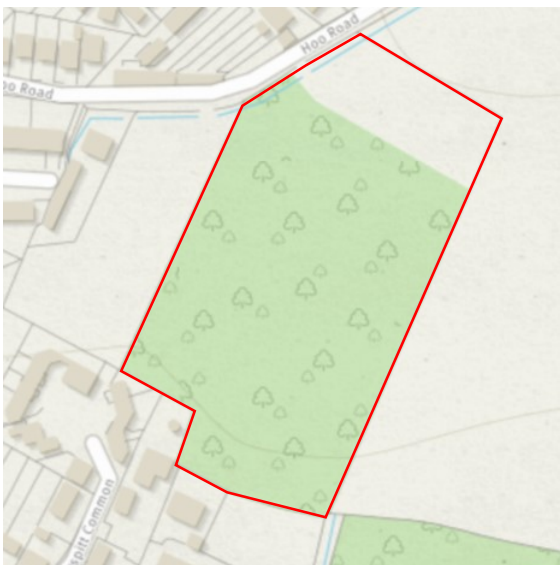
Site Photos			
Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ Locally Significant	Recommend for Designation?
Y	Y	N	N*
<p>* As this site is not currently a 'green space' it is not possible to designate it as a LGS. However, should the site, or part of it, become an extension to the adjacent Old Road Meadow community green space; then it should be considered for LGS Designation in a future revision of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>			


Site Name	Centenary Field
Site Map	
Site Area	2.16 ha
Site Location	The site is located beside the new Village Hall and is within 300m of the centre of the village (junction of High St & Fildyke Rd)
Site Description	<p>This is largely a new site associated with the new Village Hall. The site is largely mown grass and incorporates x2 play area (for different age groups), sports pitches, a pre-existing multi-use games area, informal grass areas and allocated space for a cemetery.</p> <p>Beauty</p> <p>While the site is in no way unattractive, it is not considered to be beautiful. However, the site due to its' elevation provides a location from which to view the surrounding rolling countryside.</p> <p>Historical Significance</p> <p>Part of land gifted to the village for recreational purposes by a local farming family.</p> <p>Tranquillity</p> <p>Being set back from the High Street and with an outlook onto open countryside and neighbouring villages, the site is tranquil.</p> <p>Wildlife</p> <p>As an open area of amenity grassland, the site has little wildlife value.</p> <p>Significant for another reason</p> <p>This new site is of great value to the community, providing opportunities for formal and informal sport and leisure. Located adjacent to the new</p>


	Village Hall and sharing facilities, this area is a hub for the community.		
Site Photos			
Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ Locally Significant	Recommend for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y


Site Name	Nunswood
Site Map	
Site Area	3.2 ha
Site Location	This site is located at the Northern end of the village, abutting The New Meppershall Care Home; and is within 750m of the centre of the village (junction of High St & Fildyke Rd).
Site Description	<p>Nunswood is an Ancient Woodland identified as a County Wildlife Site. (Recognition as a CWS does not confer protection on the site, or right of access, however for any significant change of land use the planning authorities will expect the wildlife interest to be taken into account alongside other normal planning considerations.) The site is bordered on its Eastern boundary by the New Meppershall Care Home. There is no public access within the site however there is a permissive path that runs nearby.</p> <p>Beauty</p> <p>As an Ancient Woodland the site has an inherent beauty; however, with no public access to or within the woodland, this beauty is not experienced.</p> <p>Historical Significance</p> <p>Nunswood is a registered Ancient Woodland (and therefore considered to have existed since at least 1600AD). Nunswood formed part of the land belonging to the medieval manor of Polehanger, once held by the Knights Hospitallars of St John of Jerusalem and may be traceable back to a deed of 1244.</p>

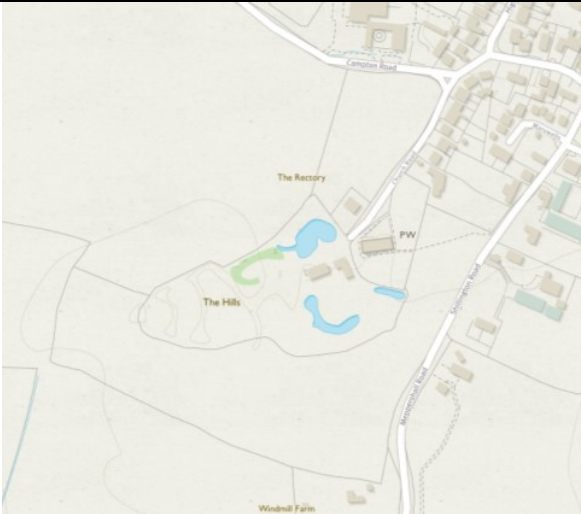

	<p>Tranquillity</p> <p>The site is set away from any roads or other sources of significant disturbance; and therefore, has high levels of tranquillity.</p> <p>Wildlife</p> <p>As an Ancient Woodland and County Wildlife Site, the wood has great wildlife value for a wide range of plant, bird, mammal and insect species. In particular, Nunswood is the home of one of the largest rookeries in Bedfordshire.</p> <p>Significant for another reason</p> <p>Nunswood is an attractive landscape feature and is the only Ancient Woodland in the parish.</p>		
Site Photos			
Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ Locally Significant	Recommend for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y


Site Name	Old Road Meadow
Site Map	
Site Area	2.09 ha
Site Location	This site is located towards the North East of the village, lying between Hoo Road to the North and Fildyke Road to the South. It is within 800m of the centre of the village (junction of High St & Fildyke Rd).
Site Description	<p>Old Road Meadow is a community greenspace which has developed over the last 20 years into a young woodland, with a community orchard, and informal games area and a network of mown paths.</p> <p>Beauty</p> <p>This site is considered beautiful, with changing views and colours through the seasons.</p> <p>Historical Significance</p> <p>The community orchard planted on the site in the early 2000's features heritage species of apple, pear and plum which were developed in Bedfordshire.</p> <p>The land was derived from former village allotment land for continued community use.</p> <p>Tranquillity</p> <p>This site, set well away from any busy roads and having secluded paths/ glades has a high level of tranquillity.</p> <p>Wildlife</p> <p>As a developing woodland featuring a wide range of native species from</p>


	<p>both natural regeneration and sensitive planting, including fruit trees and boundary hedges the site has high wildlife potential for plants, birds, mammals and insect species.</p> <p>Significant for another reason</p> <p>This site was created by local volunteers following community engagement / consultation activities. It is the only accessible greenspace of its type within the village setting.</p>		
Site Photos			
Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ Locally Significant	Recommend for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y


Site Name	Sandy View Woodland
Site Map	
Site Area	0.97 ha
Site Location	This site is within 850m of the centre of the village (junction of High St & Fildyke Rd).
Site Description	<p>Formerly arable farmland.</p> <p>Beauty</p> <p>Demonstration of Nature's ability to reclaim unused farmed areas</p> <p>Historical Significance</p> <p>None</p> <p>Tranquillity</p> <p>Although an area not accessible to the general public, the Woodland provides a haven and oasis for wildlife and provides a natural green space as you enter the village.</p> <p>Wildlife</p> <p>As a secondary woodland with boundary hedges the site has some wildlife potential but it appears to lack tree species diversity.</p> <p>Significant for another reason</p> <p>Situated on the hilltop aspect as you view the village from Shefford.</p>

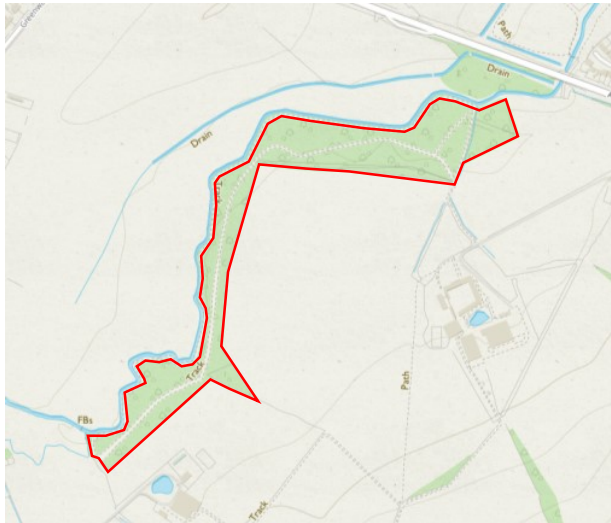
Site Photos			
Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ Locally Significant	Recommend for Designation?
Y	Y	N	N



Site Name	Land surrounding St Mary's Church & Manor House
Site Map	 
Site Area	4.16ha
Site Location	This site abuts the Southern extent of the village, including land surrounding St Mary's Church & Manor House. It is within 1.1km of the centre of the village (junction of High St & Fildyke Rd).
Site Description	<p>The site forms the Southern and Eastern boundary to the Manor House and is primarily a grass field, with a more unmanaged area in the North East corner.</p> <p>Beauty</p> <p>The slightly undulating land of this irregular shaped field surrounded by mature hedges and hedgerow trees makes it an attractive site, which is enhanced by the occasional views of the Church and the manor house</p>

	<p>and its gardens.</p> <p>Historical Significance</p> <p>The adjacent Meppershall Manor is a grade II listed building dating from the early 17th Century and built on the site of a former Norman motte and bailey castle. St Mary's Church, abutting the site also dates back to Norman times,</p> <p>Adjacent to the site of a Norman motte and bailey castle, the meadow land forms part of the site of the designated Ancient Monument known as 'The Hills'. Traces of the earthworks associated with the castle are still visible. The area in the north east corner is most likely the site of the medieval village, located around the church and castle as evidenced by crop marks visible in past periods of extreme drought.</p> <p>Tranquillity</p> <p>Although the Meppershall – Shillington road passes along the eastern boundary of the site, the mature hedges give an enclosed feel. There are no other sources of noise or disturbance, giving the site a good degree of tranquillity.</p> <p>Wildlife</p> <p>The site features ponds, close mown grass, scattered trees and boundary hedges and probably hold some wildlife potential (particularly in relation to the ponds) depending on how the grassland has been managed over the years and whether or not the ponds hold fish. Little is currently known about its wildlife potential.</p> <p>Significant for another reason</p> <p>Although not Public Rights of Way, paths on the site are well used by local walkers.</p> <p>This area is part of the Meppershall Conservation Area, designated in recognition of its part in the context of the church-manor house- castle complex.</p>		
Site Photos			
Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ Locally Significant	Recommend for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y

Site Name	Taylor's Close Green Space
Site Map	
Site Area	0.38 ha
Site Location	The site abuts a quiet residential road on the Eastern side of the village. It is within 500m of the centre of the village (junction of High St & Fildyke Rd).
Site Description	<p>Following the clearance of trees from the site in the mid 2000's, the site has naturally regenerated into an area of scrub and young trees, with a few mature trees; particularly within the boundary hedges.</p> <p>Beauty</p> <p>The mature trees give the site a degree of attractiveness, but the widespread bramble gives an unkempt look and feel to the site.</p> <p>Historical Significance</p> <p>This green space is a small parcel of land associated with the former village public house known as The Five Bells.</p> <p>Tranquillity</p> <p>The site borders housing and the open countryside. While relatively quiet, the proximity of residential properties detracts from true sense of tranquillity.</p> <p>Wildlife</p> <p>As a small regenerating area of scrub, the site has less wildlife value than in previous times. However, the site has great wildlife value potential and despite its small size will become significant for local species. It is likely to hold a relatively high density of breeding birds.</p> <p>Significant for another reason</p> <p>A Public Footpath passes along the western and southern boundaries of</p>


	the site, affording views into the green space.		
Site Photos			
Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ Locally Significant	Recommend for Designation?
Y	Y	Uncertain	N*
<p>*It is worth noting that while this site currently appears to be abandoned, it is considered to have great potential to be developed into a small pocket-park, providing low-level informal public access in a space with great habitat/ wildlife potential.</p> <p>This site has the potential to be designated as LGS in the future, should it be enhanced for community benefit and it can be demonstrated that the community value it.</p>			


Site Name	The Polehanger Farm River Woodland
Site Map	
Site Area	8.1 ha
Site Location	The site forms part of the northern boundary of the parish and runs alongside the River Hit. The centre of the site is over 1.5km from the centre of the village.
Site Description	<p>This site is a linear woodland alongside the meandering River Hit.</p> <p>Beauty</p> <p>This woodland site, along the banks of the meandering River Hit has a high level of beauty, both from within and when viewed from outside as a landscape feature.</p> <p>Historical Significance</p> <p>Formerly a grassland river meadow used by the Polehanger dairy herd until 1991, the woodland was created in the year 2000 and covers 8.1 hectares - roughly the size of ten football pitches.</p> <p>Tranquillity</p> <p>Apart from its northernmost end which is adjacent to the A507, this site is removed from highways or other sources of noise and disturbance. Relative to many parts of central Bedfordshire, this site has a high degree of tranquillity.</p> <p>Wildlife</p> <p>A densely planted secondary broadleaved woodland with what appears to be a relatively sparse understory and an even age structure the site has some wildlife potential but it lacks open space. Approximately 14,000 trees are planted with the predominant species being Oak and Ash, in addition to a mix of Sycamore, Field Maple, Wild Cherry, Hazel</p>

	<p>and Hawthorn.</p> <p>The Polehanger Farm River Woodland, River Hit and surroundings provide valuable habitats for a wide range of species. Amongst others mentioned in local records, you may spot Buzzards, Red Kites, Sparrowhawks, Goldfinches, Greenfinches, Cuckoos, Woodpeckers, Grey Herons, Kingfishers; plus Bees, Butterflies, Moths, Badgers and Hedgehogs.</p> <p>Significant for another reason</p> <p>Public access into this site is welcomed with the provision of good access structures and paths and the provision of information boards. In addition to the riverside Public Footpath, a permissive Path has been created within the woodland to create a circular walk. The site is a great example of a landowner choosing to manage their land for wildlife and public benefits. The landowner's long-term goal is to provide a sustainable community asset.</p>		
Site Photos	 		
Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ Locally Significant	Recommend for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y

It should be noted that if this site was on the edge of the settlement, it would very definitely meet the LGS designation criteria. The centre of the site is over 1.5km from the centre of the village (although is within 1.2km at its closest point), placing it on the margins of what is considered to be 'close proximity'. However, the centre of the site is within 700m (and within 500m at its closest point) to the centre of Campton, the neighbouring village. The north eastern corner of the site is also within 200m of residential properties in Shefford, another neighbouring community.

Therefore, it is considered that this site is within 'close proximity' of local residents/ site users to meet this criteria.

Site Name	Wry Close Allotments
Site Map	
Site Area	1.78 ha
Site Location	The site is at the heart of the village, just South of the junction of High Street and Fildyke Road.
Site Description	<p>The site is typical of many allotment sites, with the majority of plots well used and cared for.</p> <p>Beauty</p> <p>Allotments have a degree of beauty by virtue of their patchwork appearance and diversity of planting.</p> <p>Historical Significance</p> <p>Known as Wry Close Allotment Field the site was purchased by the Parish Council in 1962 and registered as statutory allotment land.</p> <p>Tranquillity</p> <p>Although being in the centre of the community, the absence of immediately adjacent roads and the inherent calm pace of allotment life gives this site a good degree of tranquillity.</p> <p>Wildlife</p> <p>As allotments on a former arable field the site has limited wildlife potential depending on how “green” the majority of the allotment plot holders are and how well maintained their plots are. However, residents are regularly observing foxes, badgers, deer and a broad range of birds species including red kite, kestrel, green woodpeckers and pheasants.</p> <p>Significant for another reason</p> <p>Allotments act as sociable gardens for those who hold them; as well as</p>

	<p>providing healthy 'green' activity, enhancing both physical and mental wellbeing. The time invested over years, sometimes decades, into their plot demonstrates how significant they are to individuals and the community that is created.</p> <p>A valuable community asset which will be enhanced in value in a 'Green Future'.</p>		
Site Photos			
Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ Locally Significant	Recommend for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y

Final Proposed Local Green Space Designations

Sites assessed and proposed for LGS Designation
Centenary Field
Nunswood
Old Road Meadow
Land surrounding St Mary's Church and Manor House
The Polehanger Farm River Woodland
Wry Close Allotments

Sites assessed and proposed for LGS Designation at a later date (as part of a Neighbourhood Plan update)
Aspiration 37 – extension to Old Road Meadow
Taylor's Close Greenspace

Sites assessed and considered to not meet LGS criteria
Sandy View Woodland

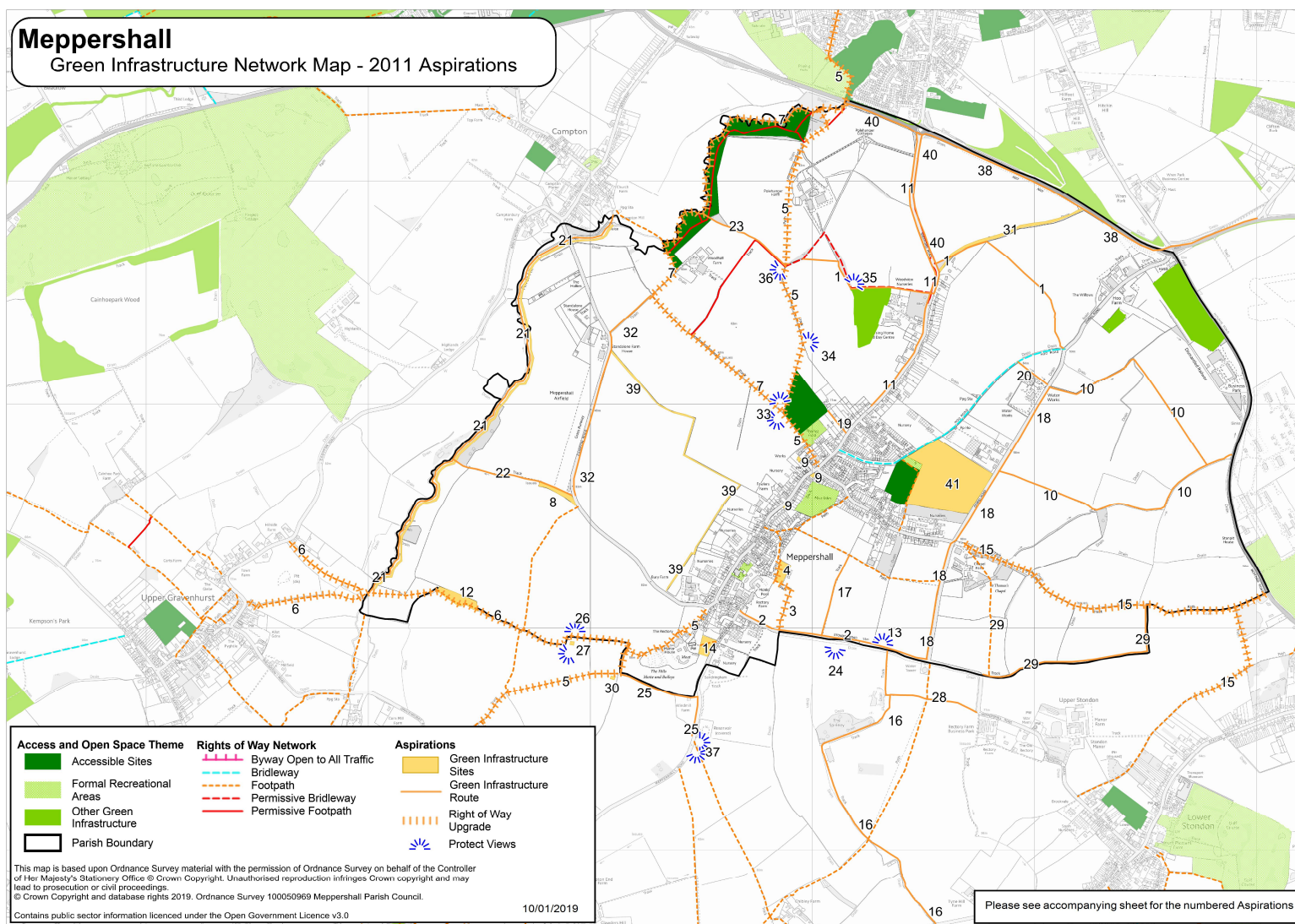
This assessment has been undertaken by Cliff Andrews, BRCC's Head of Supporting Communities and Mike Fayers, Community & Environment Officer.

Additional information was obtained from the Meppershall Green Infrastructure Plan and members of the Meppershall Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

Cliff Andrews

December 2019.

Aspirations Identified in Meppershall GI Plan 2011



	<i>Aspirations Identified in Meppershall GI Plan 2011</i>
1	<i>Create new footpath linking with existing footpaths Chapel Road/Hoo Road Bridleway.</i>
2	<i>Create new footpath (along Stondon Road).</i>
3	<i>Clear and restore overgrown footpath (north of Stondon Road).</i>
4	<i>Create new woodland close to eastern end of Taylors Close.</i>
5	<i>Upgrade particular sections of John Bunyan Trail - where route becomes footpath from Shefford through Meppershall - to cycleway /bridleway.</i>
6	<i>Upgrade existing footpath to cycle track to give route through Upper Gravenhurst to Wrest Park.</i>
7	<i>Upgrade footpath to cycle track to give access to nature area along river.</i>
8	<i>Create/enhance woodland from river alongside current track / proposed footpath (Aspiration 22).</i>
9	<i>Create central community garden/ meeting/ resting place for the community – three possible village locations.</i>
10	<i>Make existing track accessible to the general public as circular walk (east of Chapel Road).</i>
11	<i>Create cycleway alongside Shefford Road.</i>
12	<i>Increase woodland from river towards St Mary's Church.</i>
13	<i>Preserve views to Biggleswade (from Stondon Road).</i>
14	<i>Create wildlife area to retain character and historical interest (between Meppershall Road and Church Road).</i>
15	<i>Upgrade existing footpath to cycleway to give route to Stondon (east of Chapel Road, and partly outside parish).</i>
16	<i>Create cycleway from Stondon Road to Shillington Road. (Outside of parish)</i>
17	<i>Create new access from Stondon Road northwards to Meppershall.</i>
18	<i>Create new cycleway from water tower (Stondon Road) to waterworks (Chapel Road).</i>
19	<i>Create new access from Shefford Road to Playing Field.</i>
20	<i>Create footpath from Hoo Road to Chapel Road (near waterworks).</i>
21	<i>Enhance green corridor along river from Cow Bridge (Upper Gravenhurst) to Campton, providing RoW access – possibly a cycleway - and habitat improvement.</i>
22	<i>Create footpath access from Campton Road to river.</i>
23	<i>Provide footpath link from track between Village Hall and Polehanger Farm (see Aspiration 5) heading towards river and continuing across to connect with other upgrade by Woodhall Farm (Aspiration 7).</i>
24	<i>Preserve southward views to Sharpenhoe Clappers (from Stondon Road).</i>

25	<i>Link footpath from reservoir (outside Parish) across to Aspiration 5 (new access).</i>
26	<i>Preserve views of open areas and Campton.</i>
27	<i>Provide seat to enjoy extensive views from church along path towards Gravenhurst. Precise location to be determined.</i>
28	<i>Provide access along farm track from Rectory Farm to join with Aspiration16. (Outside of parish)</i>
29	<i>Provide access path to link Aspiration15 to, and along, Stondon Road.</i>
30	<i>Provide seat on path (Aspiration 5) at church end of village. Precise location to be determined.</i>
31	<i>Create woodland corridor along existing ditch/drain between Woodview Nurseries and towards Wren Park.</i>
32	<i>Create bridleway to link track (see Aspiration 7) with Campton Road and other footpaths.</i>
33	<i>Preserve views towards Gravenhurst and Chicksands from recreation area.</i>
34	<i>Preserve view towards Nuns Wood.</i>
35	<i>Preserve view towards Great Hill (beyond Shefford) from junction of proposed footpath (Aspiration 1) and Nuns Wood.</i>
36	<i>Preserve view towards Campton and Chicksands.</i>
37	<i>Preserve views toward Chiltern Hills, from near reservoir at church end of village. (Outside of Parish)</i>
38	<i>Create new cycle path alongside main road to Arlesey.</i>
39	<i>Widen hedge to create woodland green corridor (west of village).</i>
40	<i>Upgrade permissive route towards Shefford to RoW and extend to A507 underpass.</i>
41	<i>Create new woodland to extend and enhance Old Road Meadow.</i>

We Want Your Views to help inform the Meppershall Green Infrastructure Plan 2019

As part of the emerging Meppershall Neighbourhood Plan, we are updating the Meppershall Green Infrastructure Plan, to help plan the future of local green spaces, access routes and natural heritage. This is your chance to influence the plan.

The original Green Infrastructure Plan was produced in 2011 and through a community consultation workshop undertaken earlier this year, a draft map and list of aspirations have been produced. All of the aspirations listed have been identified by residents of Meppershall.

We are now consulting the whole community to identify which of the identified aspirations are priorities for local residents; and which green spaces are most important to the community.

The results of this consultation will inform the final Green Infrastructure Plan, which will in turn determine priorities and policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan, when complete, will be a legal document which can be used to guide future planning and funding decisions.

Following the aspirations / ideas that were generated and agreed at the recent workshop, we have listed these and the parish's greenspaces below and over the page.

Please read through these in relation to the map and let us know which aspirations and greenspaces are most important to you, by ranking your top five choices (first to fifth) in the two tables provided.

Please note that some of the aspirations in the list are dependent on the success of others. If one of more of your top ranked aspirations are linked; please rank the link aspirations jointly.

You can then either return your results by (date) in the Freepost envelope attached, or alternatively email your top five ranked choices from each table to: mikef@bedsrcc.org.uk making it clear which are your aspiration choices and which relate to greenspaces.

Thank you

Greenspaces		Top five rankings
I	Nunswood	
II	Old Road Meadow	
Ila	Aspiration 37, extension to Old Road Meadow	
III	St Mary's Church, Manor House and Mott and Bailey	
IV	Taylor's Close Greenspace	
V	Wry Close Allotments	
VI	The Polehanger Farm River Woodland	
VII	The Old Brick Pits	
VIII	Centenary Field	

IX	Sandy View woodland	
X	The Spinney	
XI	Green space area by Shefford Road	
XII	Green space at Rectory Farm	
XIII	Green space around chapel at Chapel Farm	

Aspirations identified in Meppershall GI Plan (January, March 2019)		Top five rankings
1	Create new footpath to link with existing footpaths & Chapel Road/Hoo Road Bridleway.	
2	Create new footpath (along Stondon Road).	
3	Clear & restore overgrown footpath (north of Stondon Road).	
4	Create new woodland close to eastern end of Taylors Close.	
5	Upgrade particular sections of John Bunyan Trail - where route becomes footpath from Shefford through Meppershall - to cycleway /bridleway.	
6	Upgrade existing footpath to cycle track to give route through Upper Gravenhurst to Wrest Park.	
7	Upgrade footpath to cycle track to give access to nature area along river.	
8	Create/enhance woodland from river alongside current track / proposed footpath (Asp. 22).	
9	Create central community garden/ meeting/ resting place for the community – three possible village locations.	
10	Make existing track accessible to the general public as circular walk (east of Chapel Road).	
11	Create cycleway alongside Shefford Road.	
12	Increase woodland from river towards St Mary's Church.	
13	Create new footpath linking Asp's 10 and 15.	
14	Protect conservation area near St Mary's Church which includes church land, meadow, manor, earthworks, west side of Church Road, Monk's Pool, west side of Shillington Road.	
15	Upgrade existing footpath to cycleway to give route to Stondon (east of Chapel Road, and partly outside parish).	
16	Create cycleway from Stondon Road to Shillington Road. (Outside of parish)	
17	Create new access from Stondon Road northwards to Meppershall.	
18	Create new cycleway from water tower (Stondon Road) to waterworks (Chapel Road).	
19	Create new bridleway alongside Campton Road linking Meppershall to Campton.	
20	Create footpath from Hoo Road bridleway to Chapel Road (near waterworks).	
21	Enhance green corridor along river from Cow Bridge (Upper Gravenhurst) to Campton, providing RoW access (possibly a cycleway) and habitat improvement.	
22	Create footpath access from Campton Road to river (link with Asp. 21).	
23	Provide footpath link from track between Village Hall & Polehanger Farm (see Asp. 5) heading towards river and continuing across to connect with upgrade by Woodhall Farm (Asp. 7).	
24	Create new woodland between brick pits & ACO Business Park.	
25	Link footpath from reservoir (outside Parish) across to Asp. 5 (new access).	
26	Install access barrier to prevent unofficial vehicular access.	
27	Provide seat to enjoy views from church along path towards Gravenhurst.	
28	Provide access along farm track from Rectory Farm, Upper Stondon, to join with Asp.16.	

29	Provide access path to link Asp.15 to Stondon Road.	
30	Provide seat on path (Asp. 5) at church end of village.	
31	Create woodland corridor along existing ditch/drain between Woodview Nurseries and towards Wren Park.	
32	Create bridleway to link track (see Asp. 7) with Campton Road & other footpaths.	
33	Create footpath across Asp. 37 (site) to link Old Road Meadow to Chapel Road.	
34	Create new cycle path alongside main road to Arlesey.	
35	Widen hedge to create woodland green corridor (west of village).	
36	Upgrade permissive route towards Shefford to RoW & extend to A507 underpass.	
37	Create new woodland to extend & enhance Old Road Meadow.	

Meppershall GI Plan 2019
Resident Survey Results (March / April 2019)

Aspirations in order of importance

Aspiration number	Aspiration	Rank	Number of nominations
14	Protect conservation area near St Mary's Church - includes church land, meadow, manor, earthworks, west side of Church Road, Monk's Pool, west side of Shillington Road.	1st	256
37	Create new woodland to extend & enhance Old Road Meadow.	2nd	181
9	Create central community garden/ meeting/ resting place for the community (location to be determined).	3rd	126
10	Make existing track accessible to the general public as circular walk (east of Chapel Road).	4th	86
26	Install access barrier to prevent unofficial vehicular access.	5th	83
2	Create new footpath (along Stondon Road).	6th	68
34	Create new cycle path alongside main road to Arlesey.	7th	67
21	Enhance green corridor along river from Cow Bridge (Upper Gravenhurst) to Campton, providing RoW access (possibly a cycleway) and habitat improvement.	8th	66
5	Upgrade particular sections of John Bunyan Trail - where route becomes footpath from Shefford through Meppershall - to cycleway /bridleway.	9th	60
36	Upgrade permissive route towards Shefford to RoW & extend to A507 underpass.	10th	59
11	Create cycleway alongside Shefford Road.	11th	56
4	Create new woodland close to eastern end of Taylors Close.	12th	54
24	Create new woodland south west of ACO Business Park.	13th	52
3	Clear & restore overgrown footpath (north of Stondon Rd).	14th	46
27	Provide seat to enjoy views from church along path towards Gravenhurst.	15th	41

7	Upgrade footpath to cycle track to give access to nature area along river.	16th	38
1a 1b	Create new footpath from junction of Chapel Road / Hoo Road bridleway to Shefford Road (to link with Aspiration 1b). Upgrade permissive footpath to formal RoW from Shefford Road to link to Aspiration 1a, and with current RoW's (and Aspiration 5) south of Polehanger Farm	17th	37
6	Upgrade existing footpath to cycle track to give route through Upper Gravenhurst to Wrest Park.	18th	36
19	Create new bridleway alongside Campton Road linking Meppershall to Campton.	19th	33
33	Create footpath across Asp. 37 (site) to link Old Road Meadow to Chapel Road.	20th	32
12	Increase woodland from river towards St Mary's Church.	21st	29
35	Widen hedge to create woodland green corridor (west of village).	22nd	28
31	Create woodland corridor along existing ditch/drain between Woodview Nurseries and towards Wren Park.	23rd	25
23	Provide footpath link from track between Village Hall & Polehanger Farm (see Asp. 5) heading towards river and continuing across to connect with upgrade by Woodhall Farm (Asp. 7).	24th	24
18	Create new cycleway from water tower (Stondon Road) to waterworks (Chapel Road).	25th	21
30	Provide seat on path (Asp. 5) at church end of village.	26th	18
8	Create/enhance woodland from river alongside current track / proposed footpath (Asp. 22).	27th	16
15	Upgrade existing footpath to cycleway to give route to Stondon (east of Chapel Road, and partly outside parish).	28th	14
16	Create cycleway from Stondon Road to Shillington Road. (Outside of parish)	29th	11
20	Create footpath from Hoo Road bridleway to Chapel Road (near waterworks).	29th	11
22	Create footpath access from Campton Road to river (link with Asp. 21).	29th	11
25	Link footpath from reservoir (outside Parish) across to Asp. 5 (new access).	29th	11

17	Create new access from Stondon Road northwards to Meppershall.	33rd	9
32	Create bridleway to link track (see Asp. 7) with Campton Road & other footpaths.	33rd	9
13	Create new footpath linking Asp's 10 and 15.	35th	7
29	Provide access path to link Asp.15 to Stondon Road.	36th	4
28	Provide access along farm track from Rectory Farm, Upper Stondon, to join with Asp.16.	37th	0

Greenspaces in order of importance

Greenspace number and name		Ranking	Nominations
II	Old Road Meadow	1st	308
III	St Mary's Church, Manor House and Mott and Bailey	2nd	272
I	Nunswood	3rd	229
V	Wry Close Allotments	4th	195
VIII	Centenary Field	5th	178
Ila	Aspiration 37, extension to Old Road Meadow	6th	147
VI	The Polehanger Farm River Woodland ('River Hit Woodland')	7th	127
IX	Sandy View woodland	8th	96
IV	Taylor's Close Greenspace	9th	84
XI	Green space area by Shefford Road	9th	84
XII	Green space at Rectory Farm	11th	75
XIII	Green space around chapel at Chapel Farm	12th	72
X	The Spinney	13th	45