

SILSOE  
NEIGHBOURHOOD  
PLAN  
2018 TO 2035

Referendum Version

July 2019

# Foreword

## Silsoe Neighbourhood Plan

Silsoe Parish Council welcomed the opportunity for the people of Silsoe to have a meaningful say in the future growth and shape of their village. The village sustained steady growth for many years, however since the development of the Cranfield site, the village has almost doubled in size and it has now become clear that considerable thought and application need to be applied in how any further new development can continue to be achieved without harming the integral character and structure of our community.

The Neighbourhood Plan is our response to this challenge. From the outset the Parish Council recognised that despite the wealth of local knowledge to call upon that we needed expert advice and guidance as well as funding for the project. Our Steering Group has worked particularly closely with Siobhan Vincent and Tom Price from Central Bedfordshire Council and with Jon Balaam from the Greensand Trust who have been very useful in helping us achieve our goals, as well as gaining the funding available. Thanks also to Locality for providing funding and advice when needed.

From the original village survey to exhibitions, workshops, site visits, numerous updates, discussions and meetings, every effort has been made to ensure that the Plan would take all aspects into consideration in producing our vision for the future of Silsoe.

This Neighbourhood Plan is the result of an enormous amount of work by a small team of villagers and demonstrates that we welcome some small-scale development and new people to our community. However, the size and nature of any new development needs to be carefully managed and controlled not only to protect those who already live in this beautiful village but also to attract those who wish to share in the experience of living in a well-balanced, fully sustainable, historic and attractive community, whatever their circumstances.

*Mike Jarrard*

Chairman Mike Jarrard  
Silsoe Parish Council  
September 2018

## Attributions

The Silsoe Neighbourhood Plan was commissioned by Silsoe Parish Council who appointed a Steering Group - Silsoe Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee (known hereafter as SNPSC) comprised entirely of residents and Parish Councillors.

The committee was led by Cllr Helen Flack and included Helen Skepper, Peter Offer, Jane Blumsom, Jeff Offer, Ann Webb and Cllr Julie McGrory, with contributions from Mick Hill, Peter Mileham, Cllr Roger Vass, Cllr Philip Kevan, Elwyn Owen and Cllr Ian Kelly.

As already mentioned, further advice and feedback was provided by Siobhan Vincent and Tom Price at Central Bedfordshire Council and Jon Balaam for the Greensand Trust. In addition, we also had valuable advice from Edward James at Historic England.

Special thanks go to Jane Blumsom (JB), Peter Offer (PO), Anne Jarvis (AJ), Richard O'Donnell (RO'D), Helen Flack (HF) and Dave Keens (DK) for helping bring this Plan alive with their beautiful pictures! Initials are used in the photo credits.

Finally, thanks to Silsoe News for putting space aside for us each month to inform villagers of our latest updates, Silsoe Village Hall and Silsoe Community Sports Centre for meeting rooms and local organisations and retailers who assisted in the surveys, and the distribution and exhibition of the plans to residents.

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## Supporting Information

<b>SI1</b>	<b>CHILTERN AONB SETTING POSITION STATEMENT ADOPTED JUNE 2011 (REV 1)</b>
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## Accompanying Documents

<b>BASIC CONDITIONS STATEMENT</b>
<b>STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATION</b>
<b>VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT</b>
<b>GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN 2018</b>
<b>RESPONSES TO EXAMINER REPORT</b>
<b>SILSOE FINAL EXAMINERS REPORT JULY 2019</b>

# 1 Introduction

## The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan

1.01 The Localism Act 2011 empowers local communities in England to take the lead in planning how their own neighbourhoods will develop. Many communities around the country have seized this opportunity to influence the future of their areas. The Silsoe Neighbourhood Plan will enable the local community to shape the future development of the village for the benefit of those that live there and those who wish to make Silsoe their home.

1.02 The Neighbourhood Area is the area that is covered by the Neighbourhood Plan. The Silsoe Neighbourhood Area, which is the same as the area defined by the Silsoe Parish boundary, was designated by Central Bedfordshire Council in December 2016 – see **Appendix 1**. The Council's decision confirms that Silsoe Parish Council is legally empowered to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Silsoe. The Silsoe Neighbourhood Area covers the village of Silsoe and surrounding area and is shown in **Illustration 1a**.

1.03 The Central Bedfordshire Local Plan was submitted to government on 30 April 2018. At the time of writing, the hearings are not scheduled to commence until Spring 2019. The Local Plan once adopted replaces the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document (2009) and the majority of the remaining policies within the South Bedfordshire Local Plan (2004), the Mid Bedfordshire Local Plan (2005) and the remaining saved policies of the Bedfordshire and Luton Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2005) so far as they affect Central Bedfordshire. The adopted Local Development Plan for the north area of Central Bedfordshire (including Silsoe Parish) consists of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) (2009), the Site Allocations DPD (2011) and the Proposals Maps. There are also a number of saved policies from the Mid Bedfordshire Local Plan (2005) listed on page 70 of the Site Allocations DPD. These all pre-date the 2012 NPPF.

1.04 Central Bedfordshire identifies Silsoe as a Rural Area Large Village in the North Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document (2009).

1.05 Like many rural areas in England, Silsoe has been the subject of increasing pressures for development. In situations where no specific level of growth has been agreed and the planning policies of the local authority are not clearly defined new developments have come forward in an ad hoc fashion, sometimes not in the most suitable locations and bringing little benefit to the local community in the form of infrastructure.

1.06 Neighbourhood Plans are part of the statutory planning system. This means that when decisions are made on planning applications the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan must be taken into account by the local planning authority, Central Bedfordshire Council.

1.07 Neighbourhood Plans are a new type of statutory plan. Not only are they intended to be produced by local people for their own areas, they also have to be approved by a referendum of the people living in that area. Unlike national planning policy, which is approved by Parliament, or local planning policy, which is approved by the local authority, a Neighbourhood Plan can only be brought into force following a majority vote by residents of the Neighbourhood Area.

1.08 The Silsoe Neighbourhood Plan will be a statutory planning policy document supported by a majority of local people which will enable Silsoe Parish Council to have a greater and more positive influence on how the village develops up to 2035. The Parish Council intends to observe the progress of development over this period and review the Neighbourhood Plan every two years against actual development and exigencies.

1.09 The Plan will be used by the Parish Council to –

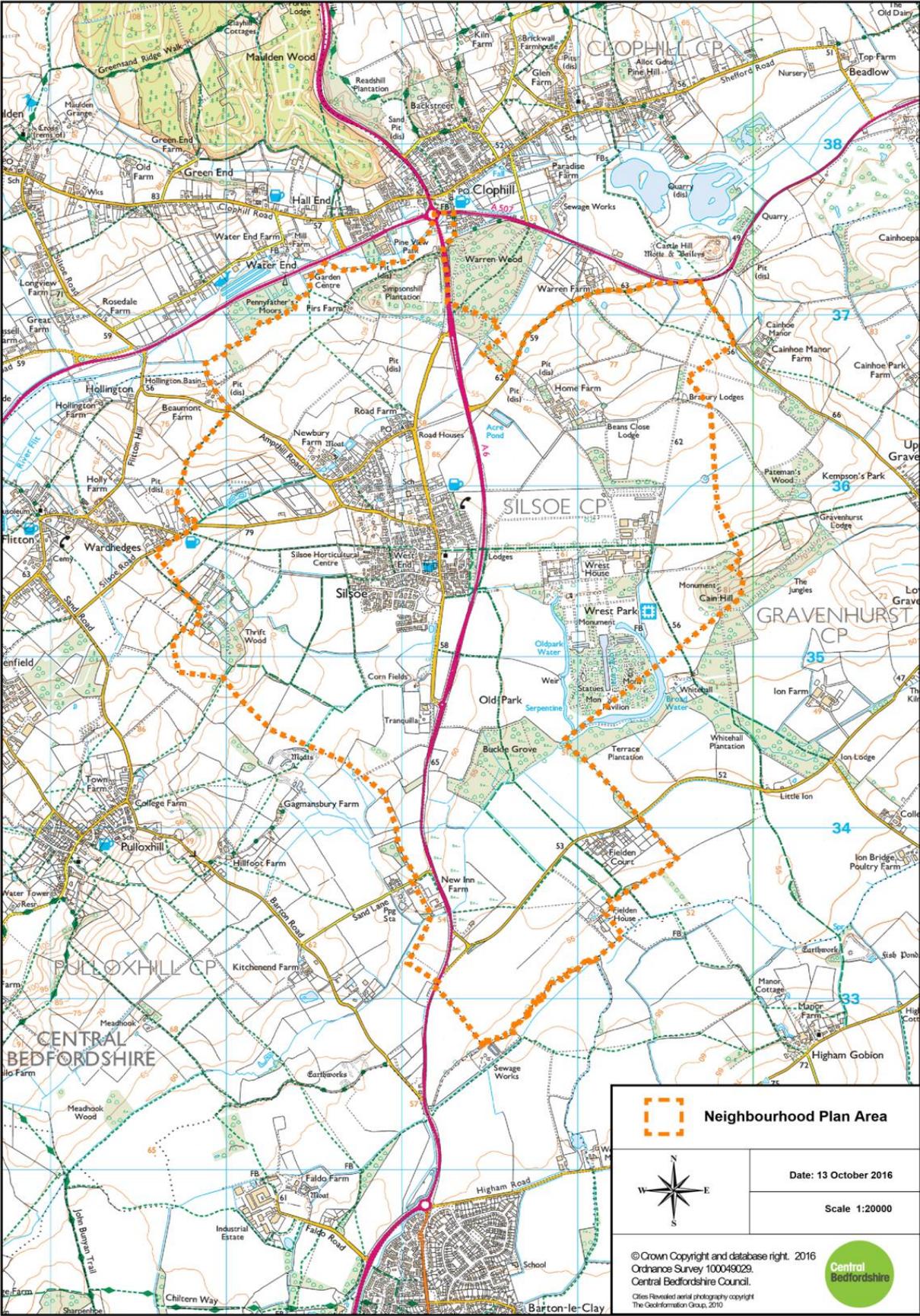
- Guide comments on planning applications using the Implementation, Monitoring and Review (IMR) Project Plan in **Appendix 8** to help guide this process.
- Negotiate with landowners and stakeholders to achieve the best possible outcomes for the community based on our stated Purpose and Vision
- Direct financial resources for the Parish in a structured way and lobby the Local Authority to support parishioners' wishes and aspirations as referred to in **6.07**

1.10 The Parish Council will report on the implementation of the Plan every 2 years and consider –

- What progress is being made on the implementation of the policies in the Plan
- What financial contributions available to the community are being targeted towards identified plans and projects
- If the Plan remains based on the most up-to-date information
- If the Plan is being taken into account by Central Bedfordshire Council when determining planning applications.

1.11 Using these periodic reviews, the Parish Council will then decide whether the Plan should be formally reviewed and if so, will ensure that local residents and stakeholders are involved in any update of that Plan.

Silsoe Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area – CBC October 2016  
 Illustration 1a



## The Scope of the Neighbourhood Plan

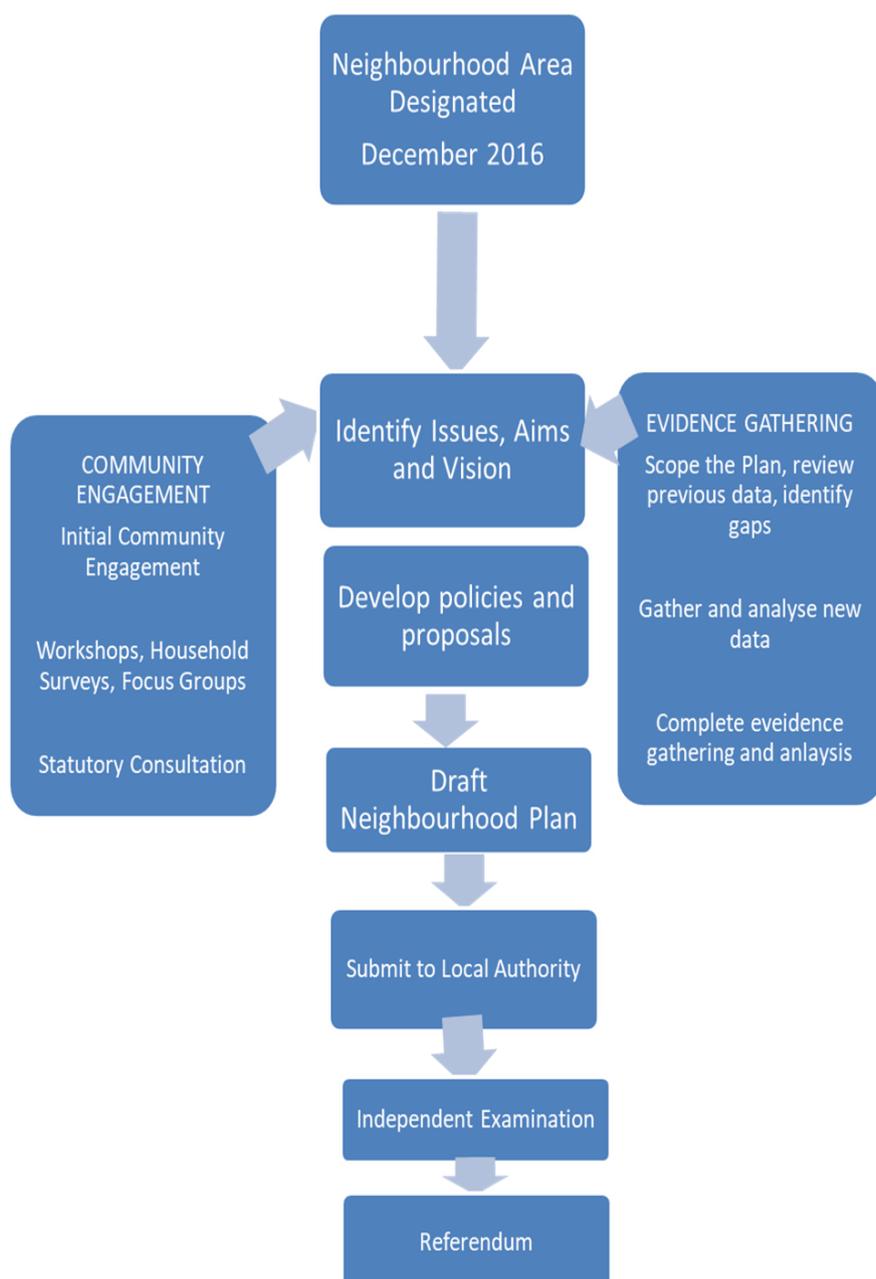
1.12 The purpose of Neighbourhood Plans is to allow local people to have a greater say in the development of their areas. Paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that Neighbourhood Development Plans must -

- i. Have appropriate regard to national policies and advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- ii. Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- iii. Be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the local plan for the area; and
- iv. Be compatible with EU obligations, including human rights requirements.

## How the Neighbourhood Plan was produced

1.13 The Neighbourhood Plan process is set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. This document defines the main stages that a Neighbourhood Plan must go through before it is voted on at the referendum. Neighbourhood Plans that do not closely follow the Regulations in the way they are produced may be vulnerable to legal challenge later.

1.14 A summary of the main stages in preparing the Silsoe Neighbourhood Plan are shown in **Illustration 1b** below.



**Silsoe Neighbourhood Plan Main Stages of Preparation  
Illustration 1b**

1.15 Neighbourhood Plans must be based on relevant evidence about the neighbourhood area (the Parish of Silsoe) and must reflect the views of the local community. The Parish Council has therefore been careful to gather the necessary evidence to inform the Neighbourhood Plan and to underpin the policies in it. In addition, the Parish Council has made community engagement a priority throughout the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan as shown in our accompanying document – Statement on Community Consultation, submitted alongside this Neighbourhood Plan, which clarifies the full details of how we have approached this.

1.16 In producing the Neighbourhood Plan the Parish Council co-opted parishioners onto a Steering Committee that had the responsibility of managing the process. It has been a priority of the Silsoe Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee (SNPSC) to ensure that as far as possible the Neighbourhood Plan is effective in delivering the needs, wants and aspirations of the local community and also meets legal requirements.

## This Neighbourhood Plan

1.17 In order to future-proof the Neighbourhood Plan we have taken into account of CBC's emerging Local Plan which is currently being produced by CBC.

1.18 It is also a requirement of Neighbourhood Plans that they contribute towards sustainable development, although they are not statutorily the subject of sustainability appraisal.

1.19 To demonstrate compatibility with European Union obligations, we requested a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening opinion from CBC and this determined that the need for an SEA has not been triggered by the policies in our pre-submission Plan. The SEA screening determination is available to view on the Parish Council website and is included with the Basic Conditions Statement and as **Appendix 3** Silsoe NP SEA Screening Report.

## Purpose and Vision

1.20 The purpose of the SNPSC is to create a Neighbourhood Plan that will help guide planning decisions within Silsoe and its designated area, as registered with Central Bedfordshire Council. It was agreed in January 2017 that our purpose is to –

*“Deliver a Neighbourhood Plan for Silsoe that reflects the CBC Local Plan yet also takes into account the character of the village and the views of residents. We aim to promote and improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of Silsoe through this process.*

*With the permission of Silsoe Parish Council, we will apply for funding to help us create a robust plan that will support Silsoe through to 2035, with regular reviews every 5 years”*

1.21 To align with the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan, it was also agreed that our sub-committees would reflect the key areas that they will focus on – namely –

**Local character** – *how do we look after what you value about where you live? We need to balance development with protecting our villages, market towns and beautiful countryside. We want to use local character to inform development to ensure that we achieve the best we can.*

**Environment** – *How do we balance the need for growth with protecting our environment? By having quality developments that are sensitive to the environment, to climate change and to ensure growth is dealt with responsibly for the next generation.*

**Transport** – *How do we plan for growth that has good connections, not only to jobs and facilities, but also to recreation services and the countryside? We need to look at improving our existing transport networks and make the most of opportunities.*

**Jobs and business** - *How do we support the economy of your community and proposed growth in your area? We need to invest and attract business. Regenerating areas can help to attract new investment to improve job prospects.*

**Growth and infrastructure** – *Where can this growth go and how do we get the best opportunities for you and your community? We need to consider not only the locations for growth, but also what other facilities, services and infrastructure these areas will need for the next generation.*

**Homes** – *What type of housing does your community need? Looking at the local population, from young to old, we need to ensure that the area can accommodate changes in lifestyle, affluence or choice. Quality homes for all, for now and tomorrow.*

1.22 To unify our purpose and goals for the sub-committees, we agreed that the Vision for Silsoe that would guide the creation of our Neighbourhood Plan would be –

**“Our vision for Silsoe is to maintain our picturesque and historic village as a place where people aspire to live; with housing and services to meet the needs of all our residents; where traffic is managed so that our sites are accessible to visitors; and that local businesses enjoy the benefits of being advantageously placed, yet respect the heritage of the village”**

1.23 This vision has been used throughout our Neighbourhood Plan to guide our policies and has been used to also support our accompanying document, the Silsoe Village Design Statement that gives specifics on design for developers when building in Silsoe.

1.24 Please note - where our NP policies state that a proposal will be supported, that statement refers to that particular policy. It is expected that for a proposal for new development in Silsoe to be fully supported, then **all** policy requirements will be met rather than one in isolation.



## A Short History of Silsoe

2.01 In order to produce a robust Neighbourhood Plan and achieve our vision, it is necessary to have a good understanding of both the neighbourhood area and the local community's views about what should be done to improve and protect it. This section of the Plan provides a brief history of Silsoe and an assessment of its character.

2.02 The village of Silsoe is in the county of Bedfordshire situated midway between Bedford and Luton on the A6 and between Ampthill and Shefford on the A507.

2.03 The village name is derived from the Danish word 'hoh', in "Sifels hoh", meaning "Sifel's hill". The Danes were thought to have been the earliest settlers here. The Domesday Book (1086 – Siuilessou or Sewilessou) records two manors, the larger held by Hugh of Walter, brother of Saher, and this later became the manor of Wrest.

2.04 In the 1230's, the ancestors of the Grey family probably held the manor of Silsoe including the site of the future Wrest Park between 1230 and 1236. When the house was built is uncertain but by 1308 there was a capital messuage, a dove-cote and a substantial amount of land. A capital messuage was a chief house on a manor or estate.

2.05 A smaller manor, believed to be that of Newbury, was owned by a concubine of Nigel d'Aubigny. The first market was held here weekly on Tuesdays and annual fair on May 1 from 1318. By 1319 a Royal Charter was granted for a weekly market and a twice-yearly fair.

2.06 A Latinized form of the village name may be seen as "Sevelesho", in a legal record of 1430, where the defendants William Butte, yeoman and William Clerk, husbandman lived.

2.07 By 1563 there were 21 families living in Silsoe. The village growth was largely influenced by the needs of the Wrest Park estate - Wrest Park house was a substantial house that had been expanded from its medieval core of great hall, great staircase chamber and kitchen - and most of the inhabitants were servants, gardeners, stable hands and blacksmiths who lived in thatched and terrace cottages some of which still exist today. There was also a baker, who supplied Wrest House, and in the roof of the old bakehouse off the High Street, the oven ventilation can still be seen.

2.08 From 1715 an annual fair was held on September 10 and a weekly market on Wednesdays. By the mid-19th century a number of trades were present in the village. There was a butcher, a milkman, cobbler, draper, builder and a grocer.

2.09 In 1796, Silsoe Lock Up, or Cage, was built and between 1829-31, St James' Church was built, replacing an earlier chapel first mentioned in the early 13th century. The cost was £5,000 of which £4,000 was given by Earl de Grey. The first service was held on Sunday 20th February 1831. The old chapel consisted of a chancel, aisled nave, south porch and a wooden bell turret. Major restoration work on church with complete seating and re-flooring took place in 1884.

2.10 The centre of the village with its narrow High Street is dominated by this sandstone church of St James The Great. Park Avenue, the driveway past the Church leads into Wrest Park with an impressive tree lined route to Wrest Park House, at its end.

2.11 In the 1830s, the New House at Wrest Park rebuilt, some 200 yards north of the site of the original house. The foundation stone was laid on the 12th February 1834 and the family took up residence in Autumn 1839. As the new house went up the old one was demolished bit by bit.

2.12 Silsoe was originally part of the parish of Flitton but in 1846 became a separate parish.

2.13 From 1906 until 1911 Wrest Park was leased to the American Ambassador and King Edward VII visited Wrest Park in 1909. Between 1914-16, Wrest Park was a military hospital until it was damaged by fire in 1916.

2.14 Wrest Park was sold to the Essex Timber Company in the 1930's, and after the Second World War, Wrest Park was bought by the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works. The new national college for agricultural engineering to be taught to residential students was established in 1962 at a cost of £350,000.

2.15 In 1981, the A6 Silsoe Bypass opened in February at a cost of £1.6 million.

2.16 Major restoration on the church started in 1985, and the Village Hall was modernised in 1988 at a cost of £100,000.

2.17 In 1999, Silsoe was awarded a £46,000 grant from the Countryside Agency towards building a Millennium Green. The Green was built on six and a half acres of allotments in the High Street.

2.18 In 2003, The Lord Nelson Public House closed on the 15th January, and planning permission was granted to turn the Lord Nelson Public House into a private house. The George Public House closed its doors in January 2015 and planning permission was granted to build houses in the gardens in 2016 and flats above the pub in 2017.

2.19 The Wrest Park gardens; a large area of park and farmland and historic sections of the village were designated a Conservation Area in 2005 and have been now taken over and significantly restored by English Heritage. It has many private and public events - including the St Georges Day Festival - and is a big tourist attraction for the area, mainly because of its beautiful gardens.

2.20 Silsoe is now classed as a large village with dwellings dating from the 16th century to the present day. Most recently, the village has grown with new houses built on the former farmland and university site of Cranfield Agricultural College.

## A Picturesque and Historic Village

2.21 The above brief history goes some way to explain why maintaining Silsoe as an historic and picturesque village forms an integral part of our Vision.

2.22 When planning to 2035, it's important to consider the past. By including our heritage, we can keep the uniqueness – sense of identity and individuality and develop the best ways for Silsoe to grow by keeping this in mind. We can then hand it on - as a place to be proud of – to future generations. This is especially important as Silsoe has a number of highly graded, designated heritage assets in the parish, including –

- Scheduled monuments - Wrest Park and gardens and the medieval and moated Newbury Farm
- Wrest Park House – a Grade I Listed English Heritage landmark property with very highly designated heritage assets within the grounds
- Registered Park & Gardens at Wrest Park
- 60+ Listed Grade II buildings within Silsoe
- Conservation areas

2.23 The historic centre of the village is dominated by a crossroads with the registered church of St James and access to Wrest Park along Park Avenue, and conservation areas along the High Street and Church Road. This busy intersection showcases the best of Silsoe, and it is that which attracts people to the village. Pictures of key landmarks can be found on the next page.

2.24 Silsoe also has a number of non-designated, heritage assets and community infrastructure – assets that have been found to be important to the community through our consultation and through the development of our Green Infrastructure Plan. A full list can be found in **Appendix 4 - Heritage & non-Heritage Assets List for Silsoe Parish 2018**. Our Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect them so that not only housing but “services meet the needs of all our residents” as stated in our vision.

2.25 Examples of our non-heritage assets include –

- Our designated Local Green Spaces – as specified in Policy SNP/EP-1
- Community services, such as the Community Sports Centre, Village Hall, Star & Garter public house, The George – when proposed planning works have been completed, shops – such as Silsoe Newsagency, parks and sports pitches
- War memorial, the Beacon on Millennium Green

## Character Assessment of Silsoe

2.26 In addition to Silsoe’s rich historic environment, the setting of Silsoe in its landscape also requires some description to provide the full character assessment of Silsoe Parish.

2.27 In the Residents Survey Feedback – see Statement on Community Consultation, Residents Survey – 20.8% of respondents said that they did not want to lose Silsoe’s “Village Charm” - the character of Silsoe was assessed in this survey and these are some of the key points made –

What made you choose to move to Silsoe?

- Attractiveness of the village (84.3%) and local area (48.9%) was the key motivator to move to Silsoe

What are our “Treasured Assets”?

- Wrest Park (92.9%) was the key Treasured Asset

In Other Comments, respondents also said –

- 29.5% love the location and either former or current size of the village
- 24.6% love the community spirit in Silsoe
- 14.8% love the footpaths and quiet roads

What is your favourite Green Space in Silsoe?

- Wrest Park (87.3%) is also the favourite Green Space

In Other Comments, respondents also primarily said (63.3%) that they enjoy the open fields, countryside and bridleways surrounding Silsoe

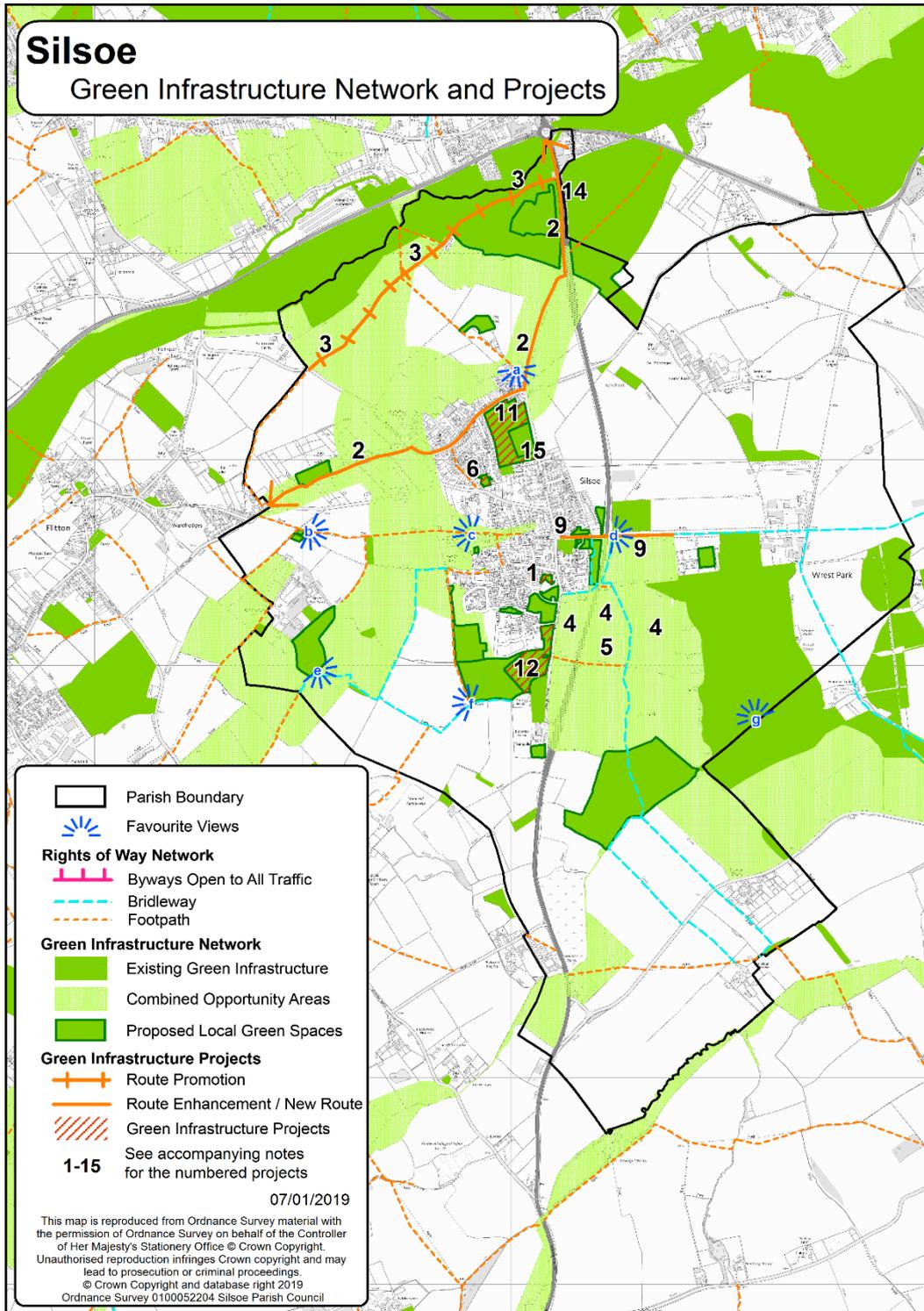
What is your favourite view?

- 17.7% said that their Favourite View was Thrift Wood – either looking down from or over towards and beyond to Barton Hills
- 17.7% also said from the High Street looking down towards Wrest Park
- 16.2% love the view of or from their garden
- 11.9% love the views from within Wrest Park
- 9.7% love the view of the High Street around the church

2.28 These views are supported by the research into and completion of the Silsoe Green Infrastructure Plan which accompanies this document. It has identified what is important to the community, and what they would like to see improved to enhance the green infrastructure network, providing a snapshot of the local environment at the time of producing the plan. The **Illustration 2a** Green Infrastructure and Projects maps –

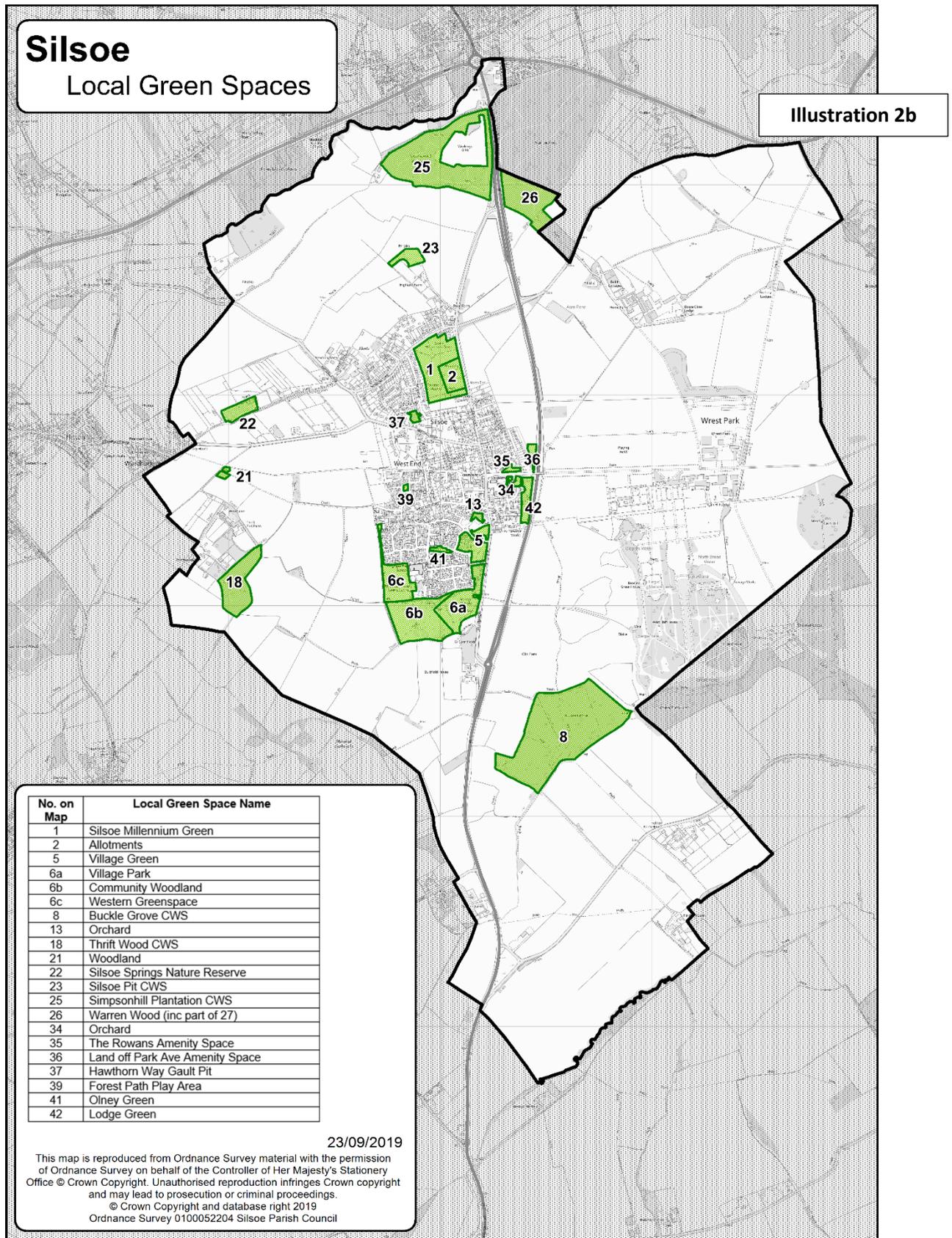
- The Favourite Views – as mentioned above

- The Rights of Way Network
- The Green Infrastructure Network – showing the existing Green Infrastructure, combined opportunity areas and Local Green Spaces
- Green Infrastructure Projects – which the Parish Council have committed to work on



**Silsoe GI Network & Projects – GST January 2019**  
**Illustration 2a**

2.29 Policy SNP/E1 of the Neighbourhood Plan shows the specific designated areas of Local Green Spaces however the whole area of Local Green Spaces is shown in **illustration 2b** below.



2.30 In addition to the views noted in the survey mentioned above, the Greensand Trust also identified, in their consultation with Silsoe –

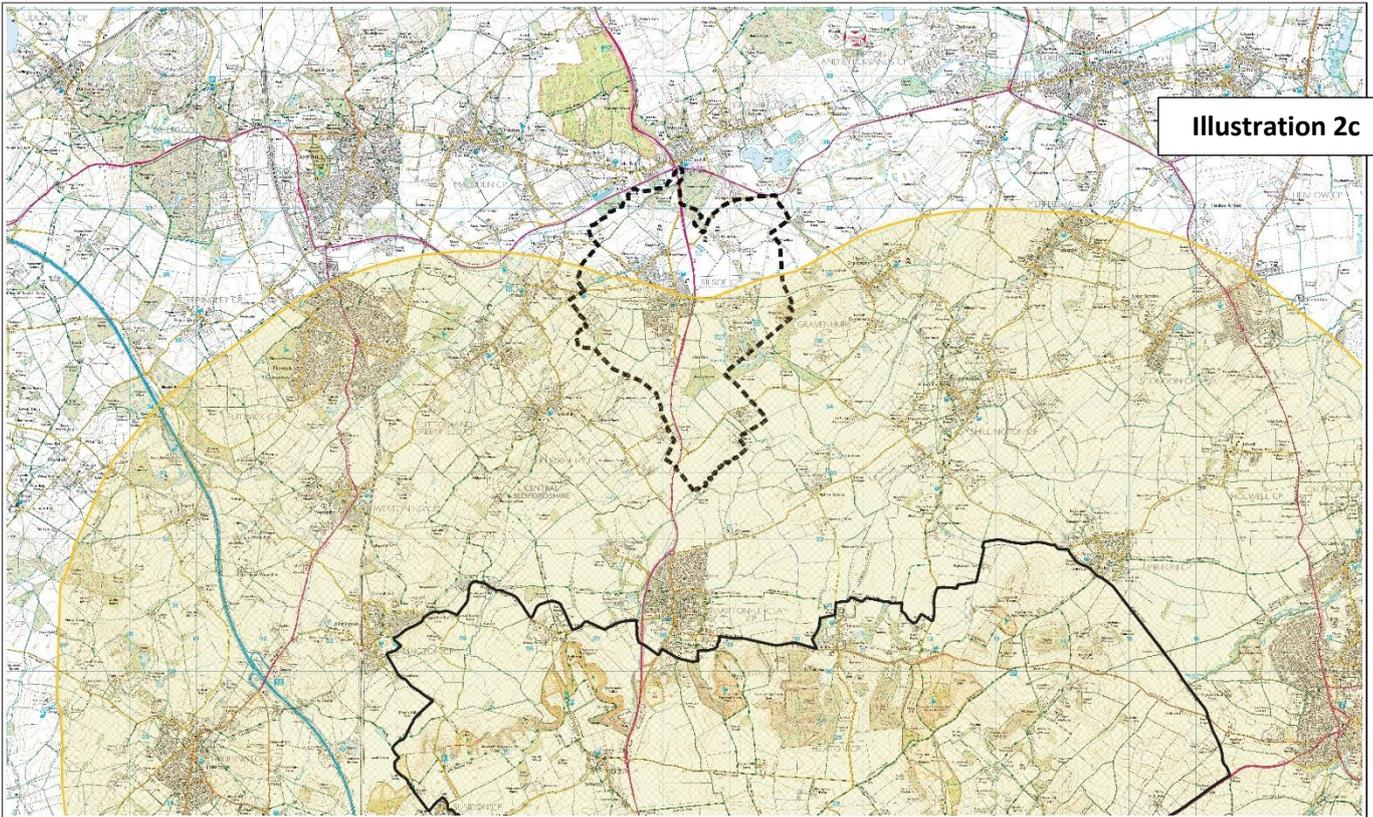
- the value local people place on views within the village, including views down the main approach to the village from the north, with its avenue of trees and from a bridleway heading west out of the village, up a gradual incline, offering views back over the settlement and the Chiltern Hills beyond. This is important because the Central Bedfordshire Council Community Plan for the area (2017) also reinforces the value of the open countryside as the most valued element of natural local character.
- *“Local people also highlighted the value of sandstone structures in the village, from the church to the various walls, and the role they play in giving the village a sense of identity, which is (supported)... by the Greensand Country Sandstone Structure Audit (Chris Garrand, 2015, which describes a “notable grouping” of minor sandstone structures (the main focus of the report) in Silsoe, with the 4th highest number of structures of any ‘greensand’ parish (36, 7.1% of all minor structures recorded). The structures utilise ‘squared rubble’ which is distinctive to Silsoe and neighbouring Clophill”.*
- the “countryside fields and rights of way network” were highlighted as the most popular “other green space” in terms of usage

2.31 The Greensand Trust also notes that “with the escarpment forming the backdrop to the parish to the south.... it is not just the views of the Chilterns that are of important (sic), but also views from them. Silsoe is part of the setting of the Chilterns AONB, and therefore development in the parish could potentially detract from the special character of the Chilterns”

2.32 This view was supported by Natural England, when the Silsoe NP area was described as being within 5 kilometres of the Chilterns AONB, thus its “setting”. To demonstrate exactly how this impacts the Silsoe NP area, please see **Illustration 2c** for the map of the Silsoe NP area next to the Chilterns AONB and **Illustration 2d** for the close-up of Silsoe to show the areas impacted by the setting of the Chilterns AONB– both shown below.

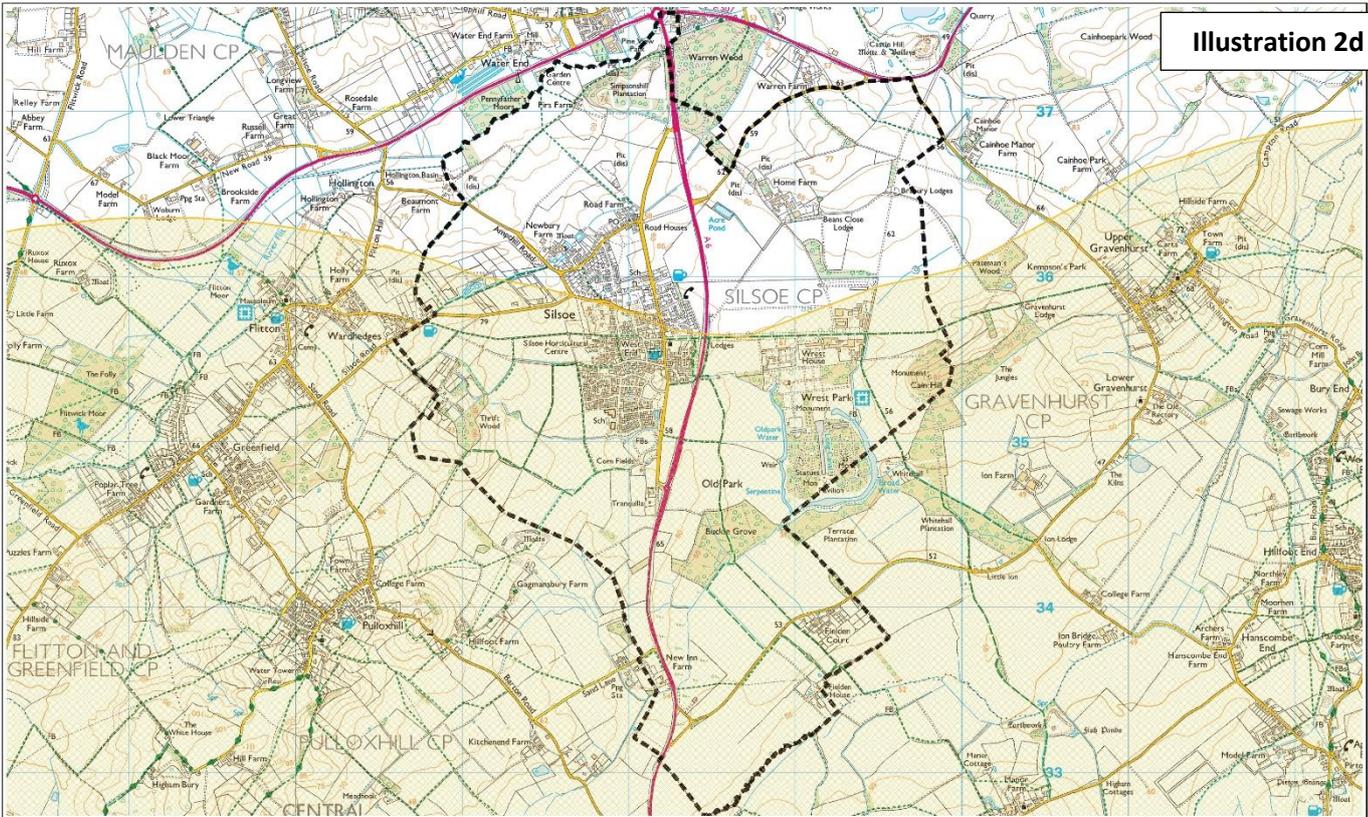
2.33 **SI1** Chilterns AONB setting position statement adopted June 2011 (Rev 1) can be used for further information.

Illustration 2c



	<p><b>1:50000</b></p>	<p><b>KEY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Neighbourhood Plan Area</li> <li> Extent of Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)</li> <li> 5km Buffer from AONB</li> </ul>	<p>Crown Copyright and Database Right 2017 Ordnance Survey 100049029 Central Bedfordshire Council</p> <p>Cities Revealed Aerial Photography Copyright The GeoInformation Group 2017</p>	
	<p>11/07/2019</p>			

Illustration 2d



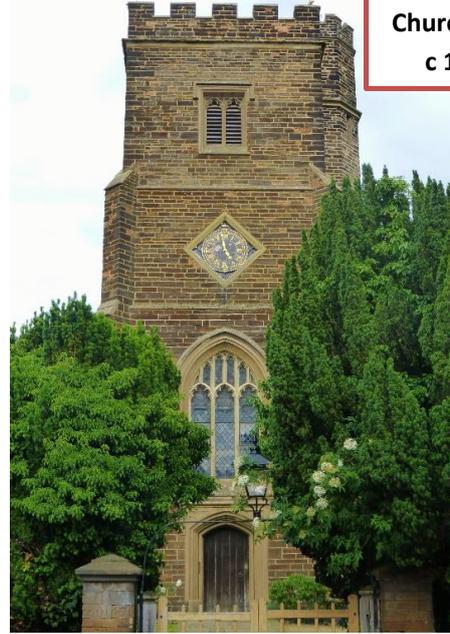
	<p><b>1:20000</b></p>	<p><b>KEY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Neighbourhood Plan Area</li> <li> Extent of Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)</li> <li> 5km Buffer from AONB</li> </ul>	<p>Crown Copyright and Database Right 2017 Ordnance Survey 100049029 Central Bedfordshire Council</p> <p>Cities Revealed Aerial Photography Copyright The GeoInformation Group 2017</p>	
	<p>11/07/2019</p>			

# Silsoe Landmarks

**Silsoe Lock-up – The Cage built c1796**



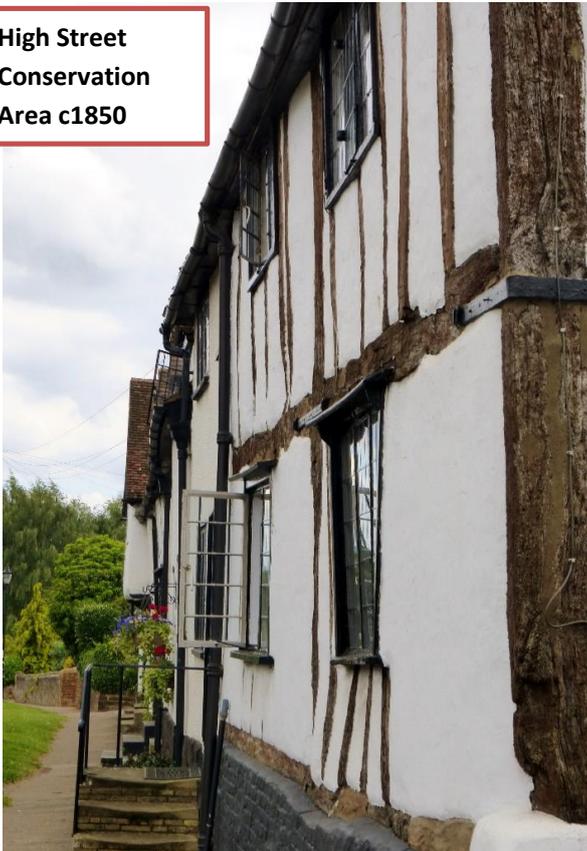
**St James' Church built c 1830**



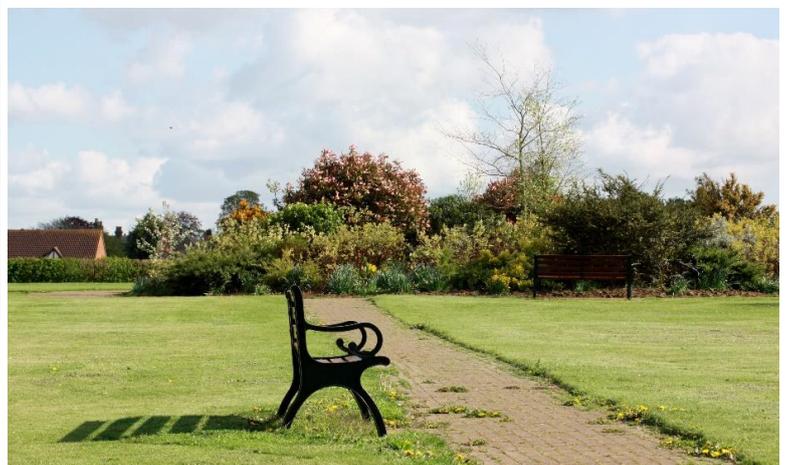
**Wrest Park Lodge House c1834**



**High Street Conservation Area c1850**



**Millennium Green c2000**



Credits –  
*Jane Blumsom*

# Silsoe Character



Photo Credits –  
Jane Blumsom



## 3 Silsoe and its Historic Environment

3.01 Building on the background of the previous chapter, Silsoe Parish is an attractive area and village that brings residents to live here for many different reasons. Silsoe Parish Council recognises the need to conserve and enhance all of these important features, and this is embraced by our Vision for Silsoe.

3.02 The NPPF sets national planning policy that requires planners to recognise and seek to sustain the significance of individual heritage assets. It defines the following terms as –

**Historic environment** - All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

**Heritage asset** - A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)

**Significance** (for heritage policy) - The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

3.03 Listing is the act of identifying the most important parts of our heritage, so they can be protected by law. In listing historic buildings or sites, we celebrate their significance and make sure that our history can be enjoyed by present and future generations.

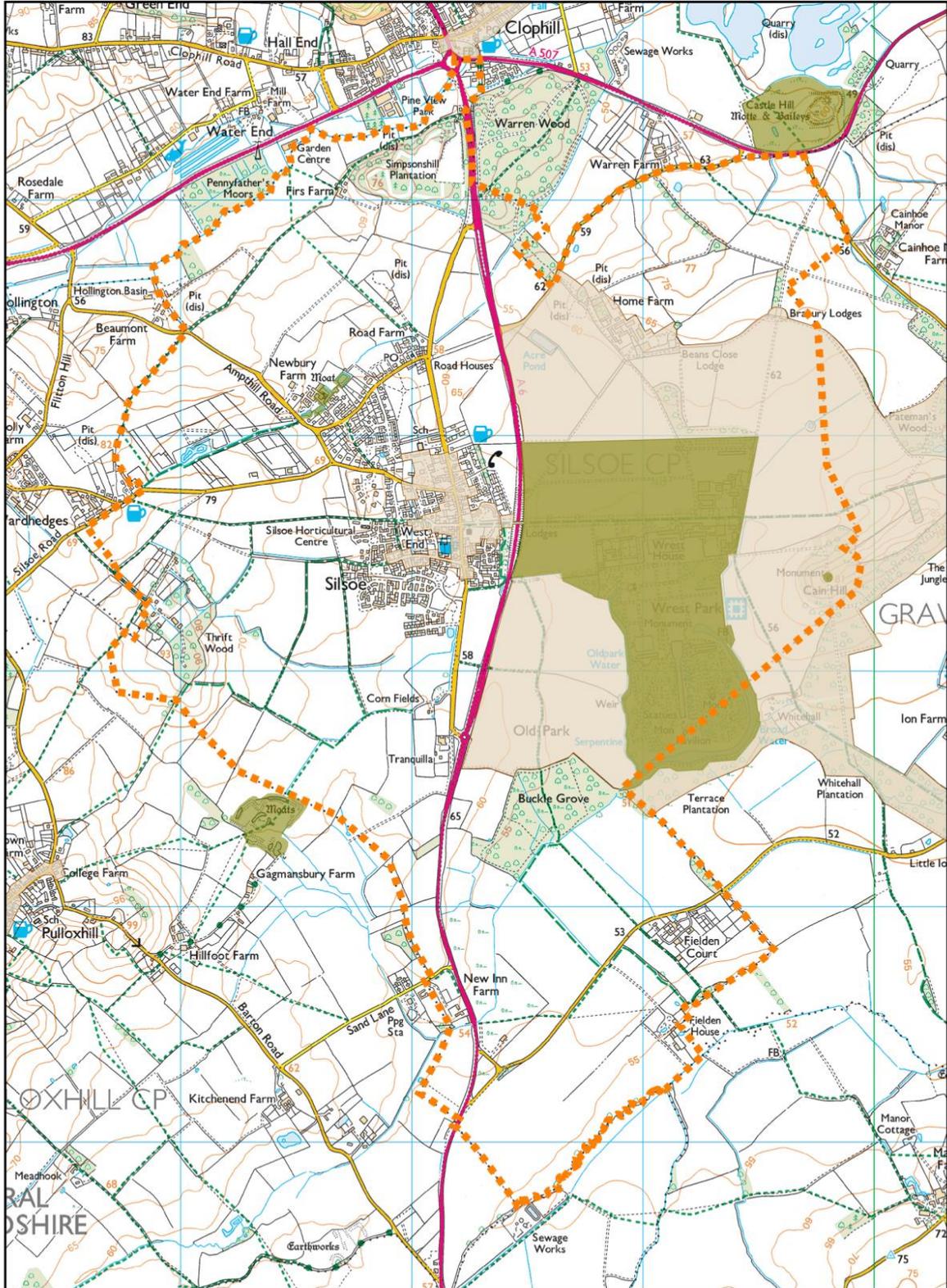
3.04 The aim of the Silsoe Neighbourhood Plan is to safeguard the elements that contribute to the significance of these assets, including the setting in which they can be found.

3.05 The Silsoe Village Design Statement sets out a guide for developers that focuses on high quality development that takes into account the historic nature and setting of Silsoe, so that developments in the area establish a strong sense of place and respond to local character and history by reflecting the local identity of the place through use of appropriate materials and attractive design. This has also created an objective for our policies to achieve.

3.06 In addition to the list of Heritage and non-designated Heritage assets found in our appendices, we have also used our two conservation areas; Silsoe Conservation Area and Wrest Park Conservation Area, as mapped by CBC to guide our Historic Environment policies.

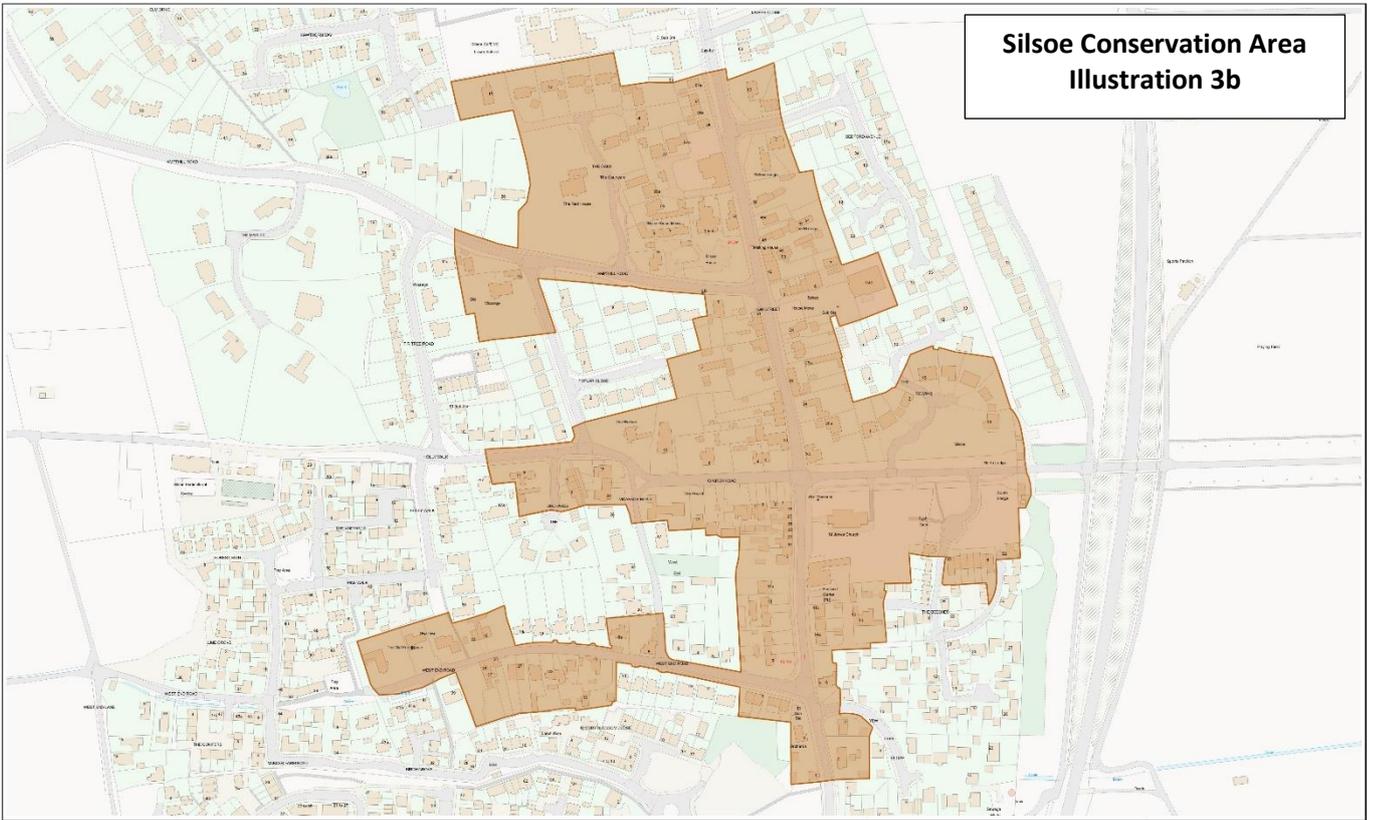
- See **Illustration 3a** for the Conservation Areas in the Silsoe NP Area
- See **Illustration 3b** for the Silsoe Conservation Area in the Silsoe NP Area
- See **Illustration 3c** for the Wrest Park Conservation Areas in the Silsoe NP Area

**Silsoe Conservation Area and Wrest Park Conservation Area  
Illustration 3a**



	Date: 15 December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Neighbourhood Plan Area</li> <li> Conservation Area</li> <li> Scheduled Ancient Monuments</li> </ul>	© Crown Copyright and database right. 2016 Ordnance Survey 100049029. Central Bedfordshire Council. Cities Revealed aerial photography copyright The GeoInformation Group, 2010	
	Scale 1:15000			

**Silsoe Conservation Area  
Illustration 3b**



1:2500

10/07/2019

**KEY**

Conservation Areas

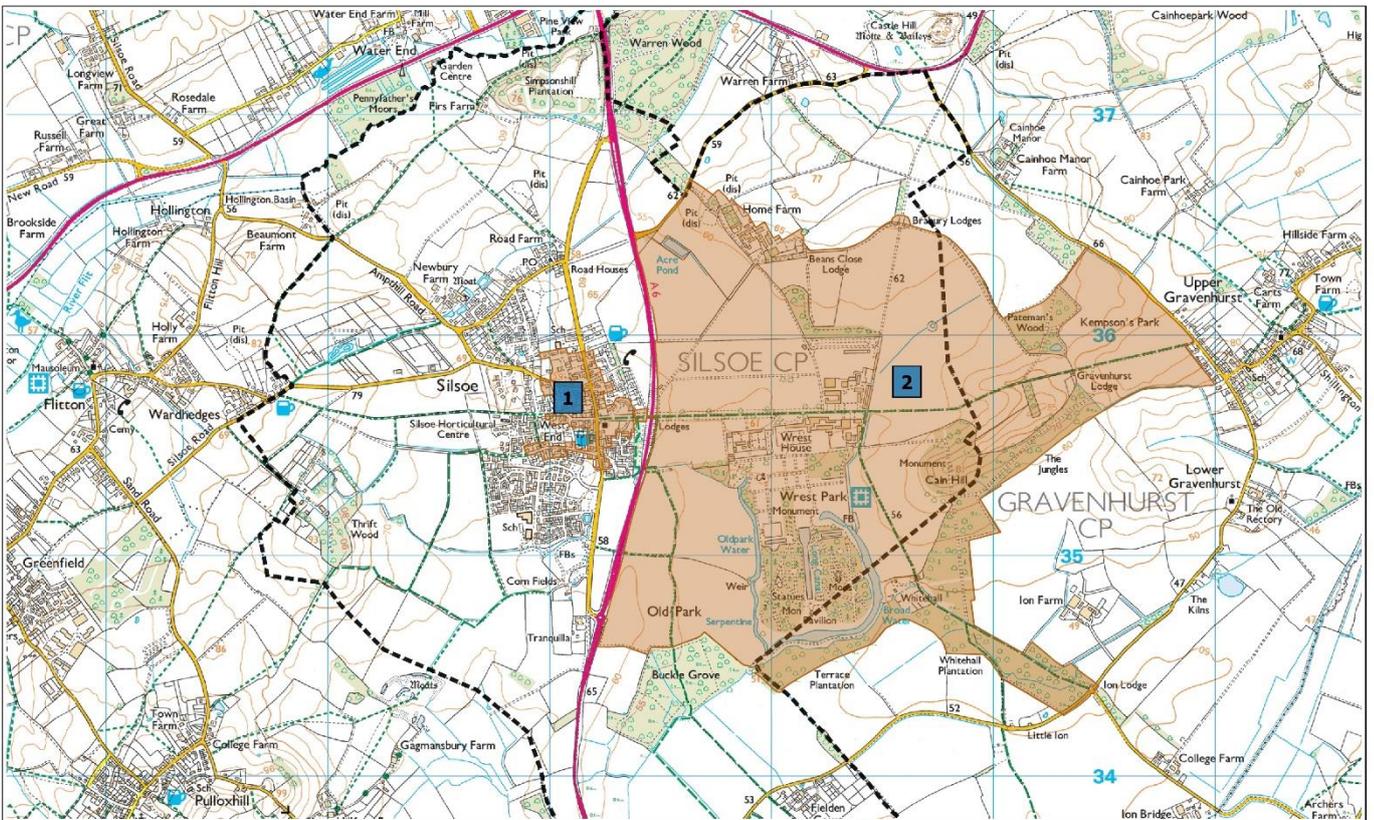
**SILSOE CONSERVATION AREAS**

**Silsoe Conservation Area**

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Central Bedfordshire Council  
Cities Revealed Aerial Photography Copyright  
The GeoInformation Group 2017



Central Bedfordshire Council



1:15000

10/07/2019

**KEY**

Conservation Areas  
Neighbourhood Plan Area

**SILSOE CONSERVATION AREAS**

**1. Silsoe Conservation Area  
2. Wrest Park Conservation Area**

Crown Copyright and Database Right 2017  
Ordnance Survey 100049029  
Central Bedfordshire Council  
Cities Revealed Aerial Photography Copyright  
The GeoInformation Group 2017



Central Bedfordshire Council

**Wrest Park Conservation Area  
Illustration 3c**

3.07 According to Historic England - <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/has/conservation-areas/> -

*“Conservation area designation introduces a general control over the demolition of unlisted buildings and provides a basis for planning policies whose objective is to conserve all aspects of character or appearance, including landscape and public spaces, that define an area’s special interest .... The special character of these areas does not come only from the quality of their buildings. Elements such as the historic layout of roads, paths and boundaries and characteristic building and paving materials all contribute to the familiar and cherished local scene.*

*Designation of a conservation area gives broader protection than the listing of individual buildings. All the features listed or otherwise, within the area, are recognised as part of its character. Conservation area designation is the means of recognising the importance of all these factors and of ensuring that planning decisions address the quality of the landscape in its broadest sense.”*

3.08 As mentioned in 3.06, Silsoe has two Conservation areas: Silsoe Conservation Area, in and around the village centre; and Wrest Park Conservation Area, to the east of the village. The development plan protects these conservation areas and their settings.

3.09 This heritage highlights the unique character and strong sense of place and plays an important part in shaping how we perceive and experience it – therefore our Vision has focused on “maintaining our picturesque and historic village as a place where people aspire to live”.

3.10 Going beyond the Village Centre, the setting of Silsoe and its heritage assets also plays a big part in how it is perceived. In the National Character Area Profile #88 for Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands – which Silsoe falls under – see **Appendix 5**, it is noted that there is rich geological and archaeological history evident in fossils, medieval earthworks, deserted villages and Roman roads. A number of historic parklands designed landscapes and country houses are cited– including Wrest Park – which combine with other historic sites, such as Bletchley Park, the Second World War airfields, the Cardington Airship Hangars and brickfields to provide a strong sense of history and place in Bedfordshire as a whole.

3.11 Our Green Infrastructure Plan that accompanies this Neighbourhood Plan goes into more detail on the environmental setting, as does Chapter 2 – Character Assessment and Chapter 8 – Environment, where we set out our Environment Enhancement policies. It is worth noting however that the northern part of the parish also lies within the Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area (Central Bedfordshire Pre-Submission Local Plan Policy EE8) and the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership area, recognized and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund because of the importance of the local landscape, its fragility and the opportunities for protecting and enhancing it.

## Historic Environment (SNP/HE) Policies

### **Historic Environment Policy SNP/HE-1**

- Harm to the significance of Registered Parks and Gardens, caused either by development within them or by development in their setting, should be avoided. Where a development may cause harm, applicants must clearly demonstrate how the scheme has sought to avoid or minimise it. Where harm remains, it must be clearly and convincingly justified.
- Development proposals that impact on the Chilterns AONB should be supported by a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment.
- Development proposals must take into account assets of historic environment value, including Conservation areas and their settings.

### **Historic Environment Policy SNP/HE-2**

- Silsoe's Heritage assets are irreplaceable. Development must conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. All development in Silsoe will be expected to make a positive contribution to local character.

### **Historic Environment Policy SNP/HE-3**

- Development should take into account the importance of orchards, sandstone walls and other structures made of traditional materials that add to Silsoe's character, distinctiveness and biodiversity.

## 4 Strategy

4.01 As already noted in the Chapter 2 – About Silsoe, part of the Silsoe Parish’s attractiveness lies in its location and charm. In our survey to residents, they cited the top reasons for moving to Silsoe were -

- 41.2% moved for the location and lifestyle
- 16.8% moved for the schools
- 16.8% moved for a specific property
- 24.6% love the community spirit in Silsoe

4.02 The recent growth of Silsoe through development in the last five years shows that Silsoe has grown significantly and in a very short space of time.

4.03 Development of the Cranfield site was envisioned by CBC in CSDM Policies Adopted Nov 2009 as -

*“Silsoe village will grow over the plan period as opportunity is taken to redevelop the former Cranfield University Campus. Redevelopment will consist of a mix of uses including housing, employment and new community facilities and will be planned in a way that complements and enhances the historic character of the village. Given the lower level of existing services and facilities available in Silsoe, development of the Campus will deliver a higher level of new services and facilities than would normally be expected. These facilities will be planned so that they can conveniently serve the wider community and ensure the sustainability of larger-scale development at Silsoe” (3.22.3)*

4.04 It was stated in the same document that –

*“Redevelopment of the Campus site will need to be accompanied by a new recreation centre, a new lower school, new outdoor sporting open space, an on-site renewable energy centre and new business and employment space. It will similarly be expected to contribute towards new local health facilities, green infrastructure and environmental enhancements to High Street and Barton Road” (3.22.5)*

*“In addition, the Council will support additional retail provision for the village within the plan period and if possible, will allocate a suitable site through the Site Allocations DPD” (3.22.6)*

4.05 Although much of this has come to fruition – most significantly the new Lower School and Recreation Centre, the outdoor sporting space; new business and employment space and environmental enhancements to the High Street and Barton Road have yet to be implemented.

4.06 An on-site renewable energy centre has not appeared nor any new local health facilities to which contributions may have been made.

4.07 Alongside this, we have seen a reduction in services to the village – most notably the loss of The George Hotel (pub, restaurant and bed and breakfast), and the post office.

4.08 What this has resulted in is a requirement from residents to see more services and less housing (40.9%), more infrastructure and services to cope with the increased number of residents (69.4%) – see Statement on Community Consultation – Residents Survey.

4.09 This Neighbourhood Plan will therefore support additional retail and service provision, as well as community facilities, particularly shops and Healthcare facilities -

- 81.3% of respondents said they wanted Healthcare in the village
- 55.8% would like to see more services – shops rather than businesses
- And in Other Comments, respondents emphasised a need for –
  - Services – pub, shops, post office, doctors, dentist, restaurant (46.4%)

4.10 According to Policy CS12 in the CSDM Policies Adopted Nov 2009, *“in Villages, important retail and other community facilities will be retained and additional local provision supported”*

4.11 This goes further in the emerging CBC Local Plan 13.3.1, that states *“The Council recognises the vital role that shops, and public houses play in supporting local neighbourhoods and rural communities; particularly those that are relatively isolated from town centre facilities and services. Proposals for new retail services within minor service centres and villages are therefore encouraged where appropriate; while existing services should be maintained where they remain viable”*.

4.12 Long term commitment to supporting these services by SPC, CBC, residents and local businesses, as well as people over the wider catchment area will ensure longer term sustainability of Silsoe.

4.13 Silsoe is not allocated as a strategic location in the CBC Local Plan Policy SP1: Growth Strategy.

4.14 According to the CBC Local Plan –

*“In view of the fact that the progress of Neighbourhood Plans is outside of the control and jurisdiction of the Council, no specific target for the delivery of new homes has been attributed to Neighbourhood Plans. Therefore, any new homes delivered through neighbourhood plans in addition to the small and medium sites proposed as draft allocations, will effectively be treated as ‘windfall’”*

## Strategic (SNP/SP) Policies

### **Strategic Policy SNP/SP-1**

- Small-scale new residential development in Silsoe that appears in keeping with its surroundings and makes a contribution to local character will be supported.

### **Strategic Policy SNP/SP-2**

- The provision of retail, service (including healthcare) and / or community facilities will be supported. The loss of local shops, services and facilities will not be supported unless there is evidence, such as six months active open marketing, to demonstrate that such use is no longer viable. New commercial development must respect local character, residential amenity and highway safety.

# 5 Housing

**Plantation View**



**Bedford Avenue**



**West End Road**



**The Fairways**



**Obelisk Way**



**Holly Walk**



*Photo Credits –  
Jane Blumsom*

5.01 As already stated, Silsoe has experienced considerable growth and will continue to do so over the next few years with current and future planning applications.

5.02 This has instigated our Strategic Policies for welcoming small scale development – see Chapter 4.

5.03 In addition to the points made about development within Silsoe, the BRCC Housing Needs Survey – see **Appendix 2**, p3 - also showed that – at the time of the survey - Silsoe residents had a significantly older age range over 44 years than the rest of CBC, and that there is a higher range of pensioner households with no children than CBC also (p4).

5.04 According to the CBC Local Plan 11.3.1, Central Bedfordshire is showing an *“increase growth of people over 65+ and a further noticeable growth of the 85+. This rise becomes even more significant in the 85+ age range where the population of people is set to rise by over two- and-a-half times from 5,400 in 2015 to 13,700 by 2035. Besides the growth of the older population, residents of Central Bedfordshire have a longer life expectancy than the national average, ranging from 84 years for women and 81 years for men”*

5.05 Having a housing policy that is one of inclusivity – that supports an aging, older population, as well those with disability or in deprivation will ensure that we reach our goal of housing that meets the needs of all our residents – as stated in our vision.

5.06 The CBC Local Plan 11.1.8 and 11.3.6 recognises that there is a need for smaller, mainstream homes for young families and downsizing older people - a mix of 1 and particularly 2 beds in the form of bungalows, mobility homes standards, flatted maisonettes and other mainstream housing.

5.07 This was supported in our Residents Survey (Q13) – 19.1% - that stated that there is a great need for very specifically bungalows and some small residences of 1-2 bedrooms, primarily for retired or affordable living.

5.08 In the CBC Local Plan 11.3.7, it is also stated that *“There is a particular need to retain bungalows for older people, as this is one of the preferred accommodation types for people who are aging yet want to retain a high level of independence. However, there has been a noticeable loss of these units due to existing bungalows being converted into two storey family homes. This places an additional requirement on future new supply to compensate for the backlog of chronic under-delivery and loss of existing bungalows”*.

5.09 This was recognised too in the BRCC survey (p9), the majority of respondents - 20.4% - of respondents favoured – when it came to choosing housing types - bungalows for affordable housing to be built. Admittedly 74.6% said no new housing – as mentioned earlier.

5.10 Our NP policy on Housing seeks to address these core issues that have been shown to be important to residents.

## Housing (SNP/HP) Policies

### **Housing Policy SNP/HP-1**

- The provision of housing for older people, affordable housing, bungalows, 1-2 bedroom homes, adaptable, accessible and mobility homes standards will all be supported. Proposals for residential development should have regard to the Silsoe Village Design Statement and Lifetime Homes Design Guide (Habinteg).

# 6 HIGH QUALITY DESIGN

6.01 As previously stated *“Our vision for Silsoe is to maintain our picturesque and historic village as a place where people aspire to live; with housing and services to meet the needs of all our residents; where traffic is managed so that our sites are accessible to visitors; and that local businesses enjoy the benefits of being advantageously placed, yet respect the heritage of the village”* and this guides our policies on High Quality Design, as much as it does of our other policies.

6.02 The accompanying Silsoe Village Design Statement goes a long way to clarify what high quality design should look like for Silsoe and it is expected that developers should reflect in their proposals how they will reach our goals in their design.

6.03 Those proposals that show a true understanding of Silsoe and its picturesque and historic environment through sensitive design will stand a greater chance of being supported.

6.04 Proposals should outline how accessible their design is to those with disabilities.

6.05 Density will reflect that of the older parts of the village – pre 2011 – to ensure new development is not so concentrated that it can be seen to impact the setting of the village.

6.06 As much value and weight is given to landscape design as it is given to building design when it comes to evaluating proposals. As Silsoe sits in an agricultural setting, between the Chilterns AONB and Greensand Ridge, in the distinctive heritage context of Wrest Park, there is an expectation that landscape design is of equally high quality to ensure a blending in of any development with the existing street and landscapes.

6.07 To ensure Silsoe achieves its vision for this NP for up to 2035, there are a list of projects that we are working on to create this future – see **Appendix 6** – funding from Section 106 agreements and CILs can be used to complete them.

6.08 These projects are a reflection of what residents have asked for, based on the results of the Residents Survey, feedback to SPC and consultation for the GI Plan 2018. Their completion will add to the social and community infrastructure that will sustain Silsoe over the coming years.

6.09 In our Residents Survey, 17.5% said that better services were needed within the village, and 55.8% would like to see more services – shops rather than businesses - Services – pub, shops, post office, doctors, dentist, restaurant (46.4%) and 81.3% of respondents specifically said Healthcare.

6.10 A Village Medical Consulting Room would be greatly supported therefore due to the high level of feedback we have had for one to be placed in the village.

6.11 The opening of the Community Sports Centre has also been proven popular and is well-used by the community. Retention and further development of this facility will be a priority for the SPC and through the NP.

6.12 Agreements with developers in the past have caused some frustration with villagers, mainly due to lengthy delays – for example the handover of the Community Sports Centre, Sports Pitches and play areas, and incomplete works – for example the Community Woodland and planting that doesn't match agreed plans or is not replaced within two years, as agreed – for example in the Miller development.

6.13 To address these issues timely completion of responsibilities would be helpful.

6.14 In addition to these services, villagers have also expressed dissatisfaction with Broadband and Mobile phone coverage in Silsoe. This was further compounded by 69.23% of respondents in our Business Survey – see **Statement on Community Consultation**, Business Survey – stating that Connectivity – Wi-Fi and broadband coverage – would be something that they would change. This was further supported in our lunchtime drop-in session for businesses at Wrest Park who said the same thing – see Statement on Community Consultation, Business Lunch Survey. Specific feedback included –

- Mobile phone coverage is still not good, many calls get missed/dropped etc due to the poor coverage. Reliable 4G would be a dream!
- Mobile signal unworkable
- Mobile phone signal requires improvement
- Mobile phones a problem

6.15 This is reflected in Paragraphs 42 and 43 of the NPPF, *“Advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth. The development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services....In preparing Local Plans, local planning authorities should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including telecommunications and high speed broadband. They should aim to keep the numbers of radio and telecommunications masts and the sites for such installations to a minimum consistent with the efficient operation of the network. Existing masts, buildings and other structures should be used, unless the need for a new site has been justified. Where new sites are required, equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate”*.

6.16 CBC’s approved Joint Local Broadband Plan 2012 sets out the Council’s ambition to deliver improved broadband with Next Generation Access for all by 2020 and access to high quality communication technology will be essential for people who live and work in Silsoe, so this will be prioritised in our policies, as it will enable us to future-proof our services for the long term.

## High Quality Design (SNP/HQ) Policies

### **High Quality Policy SNP/HQ-1**

- All development in Silsoe must be of the highest quality. It should reflect the guidance provided in the Silsoe Village Design Statement and should, through for example, the use of local materials and innovative design, take into account and integrate well with its surroundings.
- Development should, where possible and achievable, promote the use of public transport, walking and cycling. It should provide for sufficient parking such that there is no harm to highway safety and landscaping should include locally appropriate trees and shrubs.

### **High Quality Policy SNP/HQ-2**

- The provision of infrastructure to support high quality electronic communications networks, including telecommunications and high speed broadband, will be supported. Existing masts, buildings or other structures should be used, unless the need for a new site is justified. Where new sites are required, equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged, having regard to local character. Whilst not a policy requirement, Silsoe Parish Council strongly encourages providers to consult on any such proposals as early as possible.

# 7 Development in the Countryside

7.01 With particular reference to Chapter 2 which describes the setting of Silsoe, preserving our countryside and landscape is a priority to the development of this plan.

7.02 We lay out our Environment policies in the next chapter which go a long way to describe how we will do this, along with the support of the Silsoe GI Plan 2018.

7.03 Knowing that Silsoe is in an agricultural and rural area however, it is important to note our policy when it comes to development in the countryside.

## Development in the Countryside (SNP/DC) Policies

### **Development in the Countryside Policy SNP/DC-1**

- The development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based businesses will be supported. The re-use of redundant or disused buildings that leads to an enhancement of the immediate setting will be supported.

# 8 Environment



**Panorama of Silsoe from west to east 2018 - RO'D**



**View of Silsoe from Thrift Wood – 2017 - JB**



**Top of Amphill Road – 2017 - JB**



**Silsoe from north west to south east – RO'D**



**Walk to Wardhedges – 2017 - JB**

8.1 This section comprises of our Environment Enhancement and our Climate Change & Sustainability policies.

8.2 With the help of the Greensand Trust, SNPSC commissioned a Green Infrastructure Plan (GIP) to support our environmental needs that will be part of our Neighbourhood Plan. This GIP can be found in the Supporting Documents and specifically informs and supports the SNP Environment Policies.

8.3 The parish of Silsoe is described in the accompanying GI Plan as lying –

*“predominantly on gault clay, with the dip slope of the Greensand Ridge (Lower greensand) immediately to the north. The River Flit forms the northern boundary of the parish, and its valley cuts through the edge of the Greensand. This is reflected in the Central Bedfordshire Landscape Character Assessment (LUC, 2015) which identifies three Landscape Character Areas (LCA) within the parish:*

- *A narrow wedge in the very north of the parish is within the **Flit Greensand Valley (LCA 7A)** defined by the relatively straight River Flit, which has carved a valley through the greensand and created a small ‘outlier’ of the Greensand Ridge to the south, and adjacent floodplain valley landscape;*
- *This ‘outlier’ forms the main component of the **Mid Greensand Ridge (LCA 6B)** defined by the prominent, often wooded (e.g. Simpsonhill Plantation and Warren Wood) ridge of sandstone – the village of Silsoe sits in this LCA;*
- *The gently rolling landscape of the **Barton-le-Clay Clay Vale (LCA 7B)** with expansive views – the majority of the parish with areas to the east, west and south of the village itself are all within this LCA, with open, expansive views to the prominent landscapes of the Chiltern Hills, Clay Ridge and Greensand Ridge”*

8.4 In Chapter 2 - 2.32, we demonstrated how Silsoe is impacted by being in the setting of the AONB, with maps to illustrate this shown in **Illustrations 2c and 2d**. In the CBC Local Plan– 15.8.4, it is noted that development proposals within the setting should demonstrate how they have considered– for example –

*“...the locally distinctive character of settlements and their landscape settings, including the transition between man-made and natural landscapes at the edge of settlements; visually sensitive skylines, geological and topographical features; landscapes of cultural, historic and heritage value...”*

8.5 The Chilterns Conservation Board have produced a Position Statement on “Development affecting the setting of the Chilterns AONB” (2011) – see **Supporting Information 1 (SI1)** - which provides further guidance to developers.

8.6 The importance of trees is noted in the GI Plan (p14) and this has been further supported in our Landscape Design Guidelines in the Silsoe Village Design Statement, our HE and HQ policies.

8.7 Indeed the Green Infrastructure around Silsoe plays a big role in maintaining our picturesque and historic village as a place where people want to live and work. It has already been stated the reasons why residents have moved to the village in Chapter 2 - 2.27. It is worth noting that in addition to this, businesses also like being in Silsoe with 75% saying it’s the beautiful location that is good about being here with 40% choosing to locate to Silsoe because of the attractiveness of the area – see Statement on Community Consultation.

8.8 With above points made, we fully endorse the GI Plan policy proposals, and which specifically are related to our Environment policies are – for Landscape -

- *Protection of important views, including views from, to and within the village*
- *To recognise the special landscape value and settlement identity of Silsoe and its parish, including as part of the setting for the Chilterns AONB and Greensand Ridge, and seek to protect the integrity of the settlement from any further significant expansion, protecting and enhancing its distinctiveness. A Landscape Visual Impact Assessment should accompany any proposed development*
- *To protect areas of permanent pasture from development, particularly when they have no specific designation, and that landowners have access to information on the value of this land and how to ensure that they are protected*
- *To ensure the hedgerow network is protected and enhanced.*

For Biodiversity –

- *Raise awareness of local biodiversity and involve local people in managing green spaces for wildlife*
- *To take account of existing and potential biodiversity value, seek to protect, buffer and enhance existing biodiversity assets (sites) and networks, especially along the Flit Valley*
- *To link areas of biodiversity value to create more robust networks, including the Flit Valley and in the south-west of the parish*
- *To protect areas of permanent pasture from development, particularly when they have no specific designation, and that landowners have access to information on the value of this land and how to ensure that they are protected*
- *To ensure the hedgerow network is protected and enhanced*
- *To protect and enhance existing orchards as a biodiversity and cultural asset for the village.*

And for Access, Open Space and Recreation Policy -

- *To protect and enhance existing greenspaces and create new greenspace to meet future demand by:*
  - I. Designating Local Green Spaces*
  - II. Improving the quality and functionality of existing greenspaces through improvements to facilities and/or landscaping*
  - III. Identifying opportunities for delivering new greenspaces to address existing and future deficits, ensuring they are designed to a high quality and identifying appropriate long-term management mechanisms*
- *To create better networks of bridleways and cycle paths, creating routes that reduce car use and link Silsoe to other villages and service centres*
- *To ensure any new development enhances access route connectivity and makes provision for linking to existing networks*

- *Support the development of the Flit Valley Walk recreational route through the parish.*

8.9 In addition to the above, we also reiterate the importance of our Local Green Spaces as listed in policy SNP/EP-1 and shown in **Illustrations 2a** Green Infrastructure and Projects and **Illustration 2b** Local Green Spaces. Residents and Landowners were contacted and invited to attend all our exhibitions and events to have an input in choosing Local Green Spaces that were demonstrably special to them as a local community - our Statement of Community Consultation gives further details on how we did this.

8.10 With the increase in development in Silsoe, there is less surface area for water to drain off naturally and so this causes problems to the land that is left and its viability for development either for housing or as a village green space amenity. This local knowledge should therefore be taken into account when making planning decisions.

8.11 Finally, residents have been very vocal in protecting our Environment and this was evidenced throughout the NP and GIP consultations. So, protecting the environment in which they live is a key foundation to the Neighbourhood Plan.

## Environment (SNP/EP) Policies

### Environment Policy SNP/EP-1

The 22 areas listed below and identified in **Illustration 2b**, with maps to identify their specific location following this policy, are designated as areas of Local Green Space, where development is ruled out other than in very special circumstances. They are listed as -

1	Silsoe Millennium Green	23	Silsoe Pit CWS
2	Allotments	25	Simpsonhill Plantation CWS
5	Village Green	26	Warren Wood
6a	Village Park	34	Orchard (The Beeches)
6b	Community Woodland	35	The Rowans Amenity Space
6c	Western Greenspace	36	Land off Park Ave Amenity Space
8	Buckle Grove CWS	37	Hawthorn Way Gault Pit
13	Orchard (Mander Farm)	39	Forest Path Play Area
18	Thrift Wood CWS	41	Olney Green
21	Woodland (Wardhedges)	42	Lodge Green
22	Silsoe Springs Nature Reserve		

## Local Green Spaces

### 1 Silsoe Millenium Green



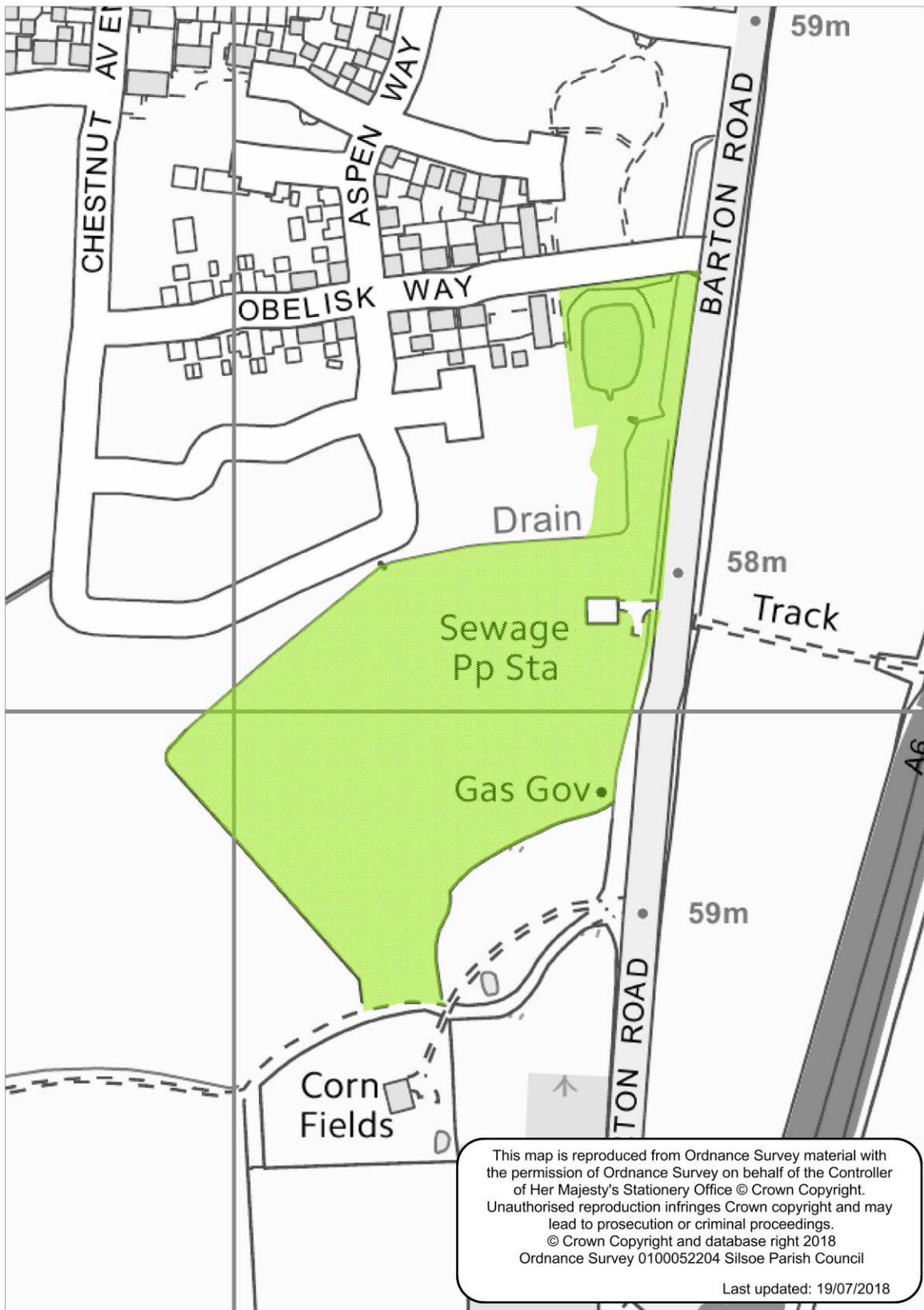
## 2 Allotments



5 Village Green



6a Village Park



6b Community Woodland



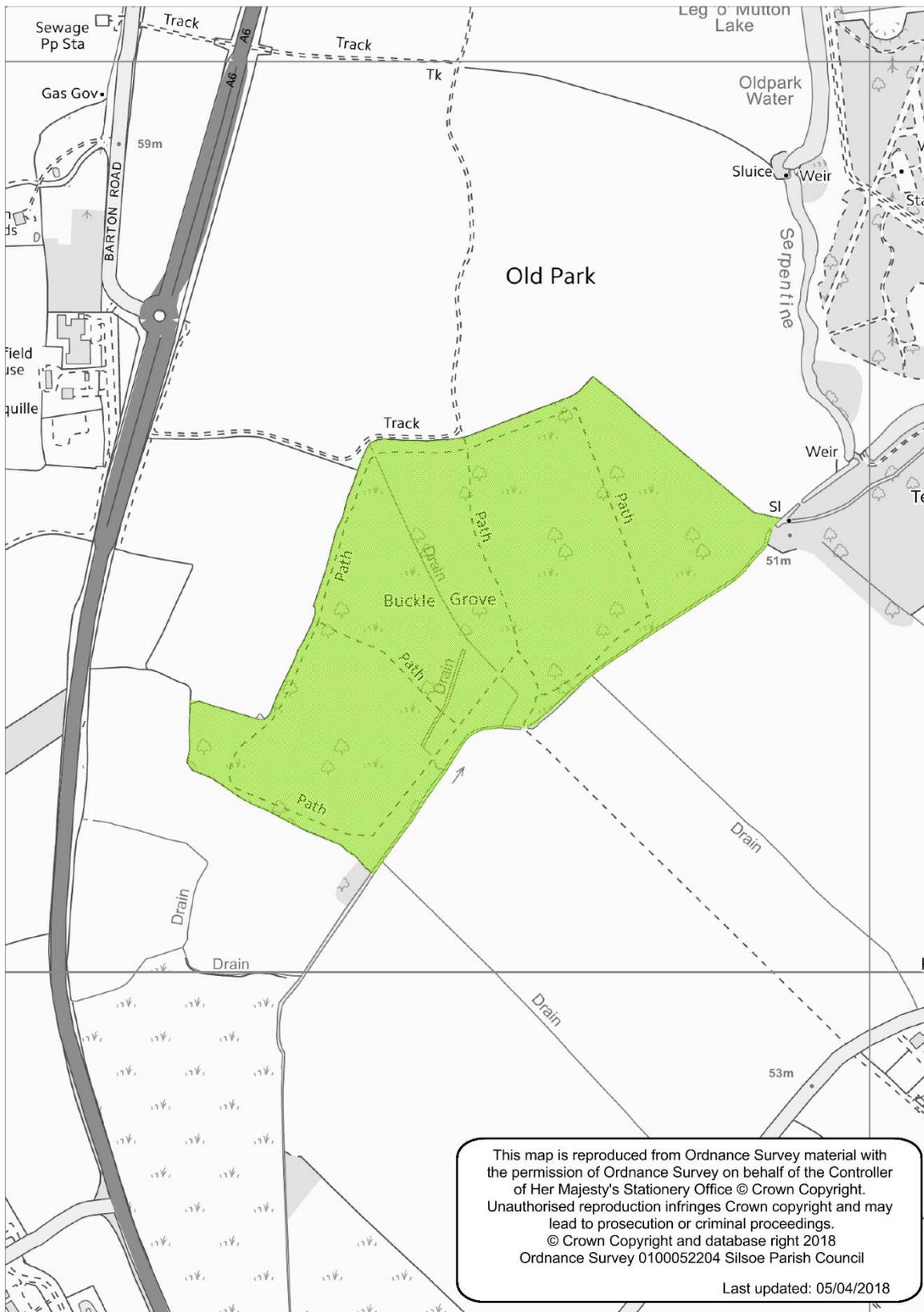
6c Western Greenspace



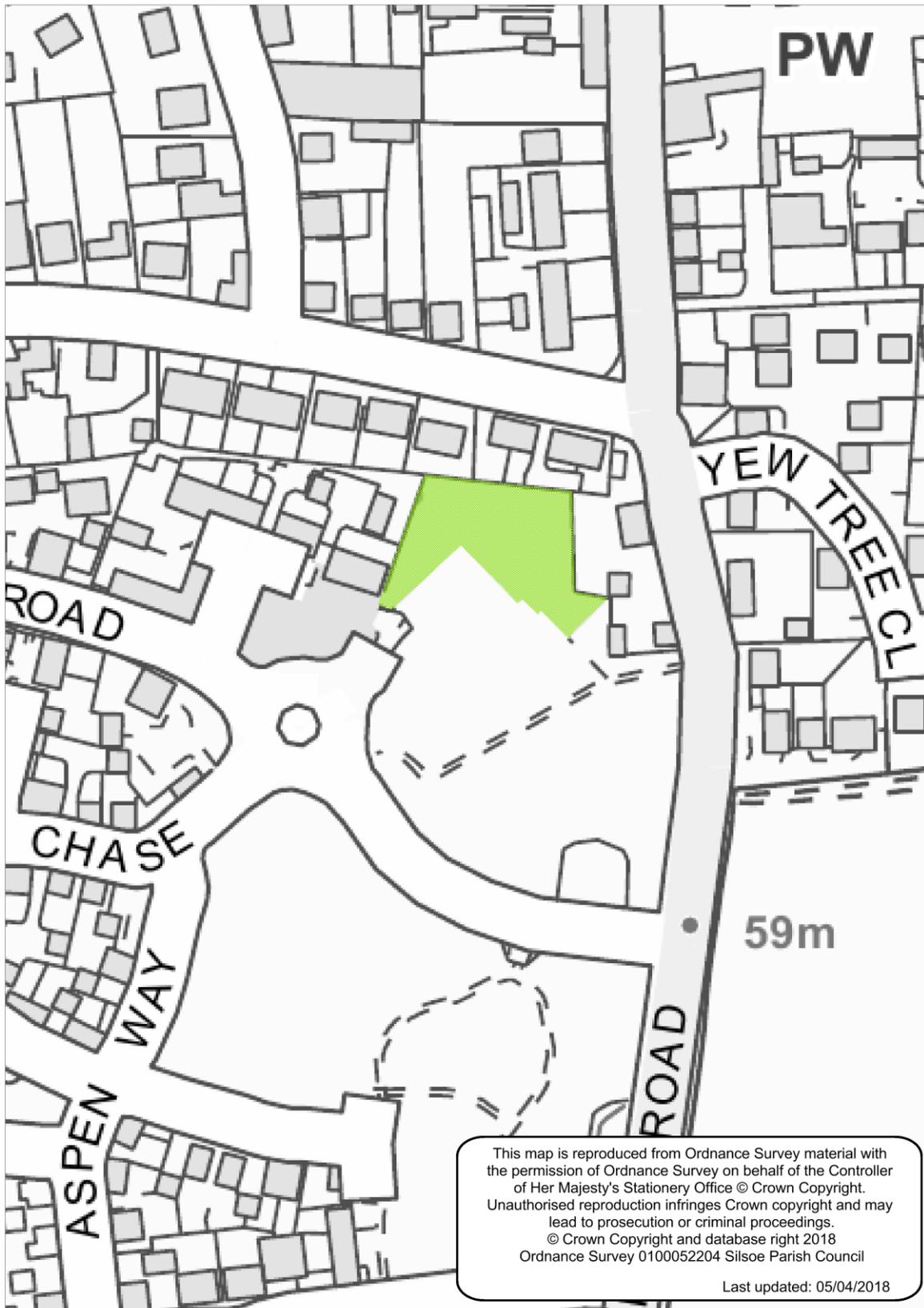
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Last updated: 19/07/2018

## 8 Buckle Grove CWS

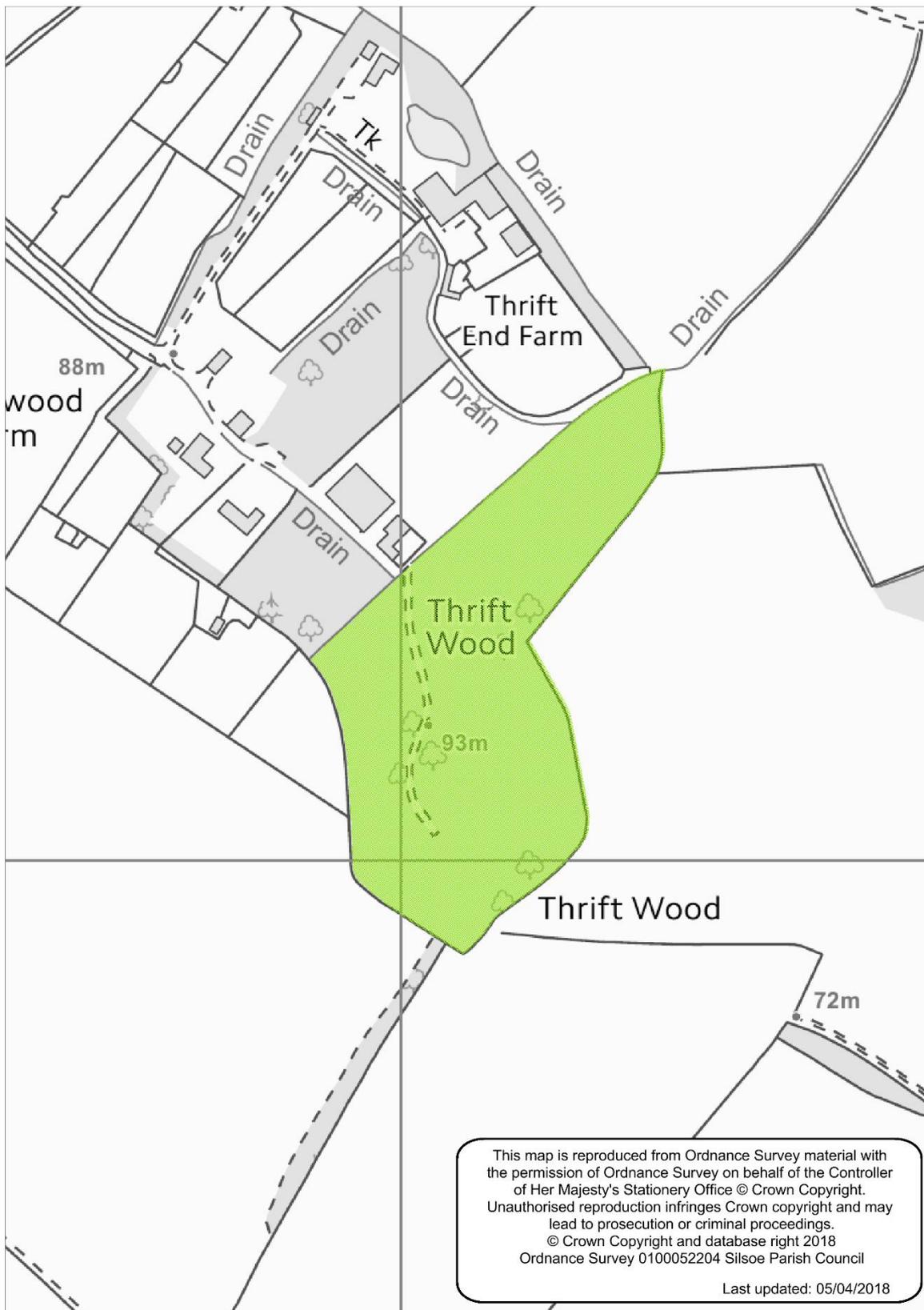


13 Orchard (Mander Farm)

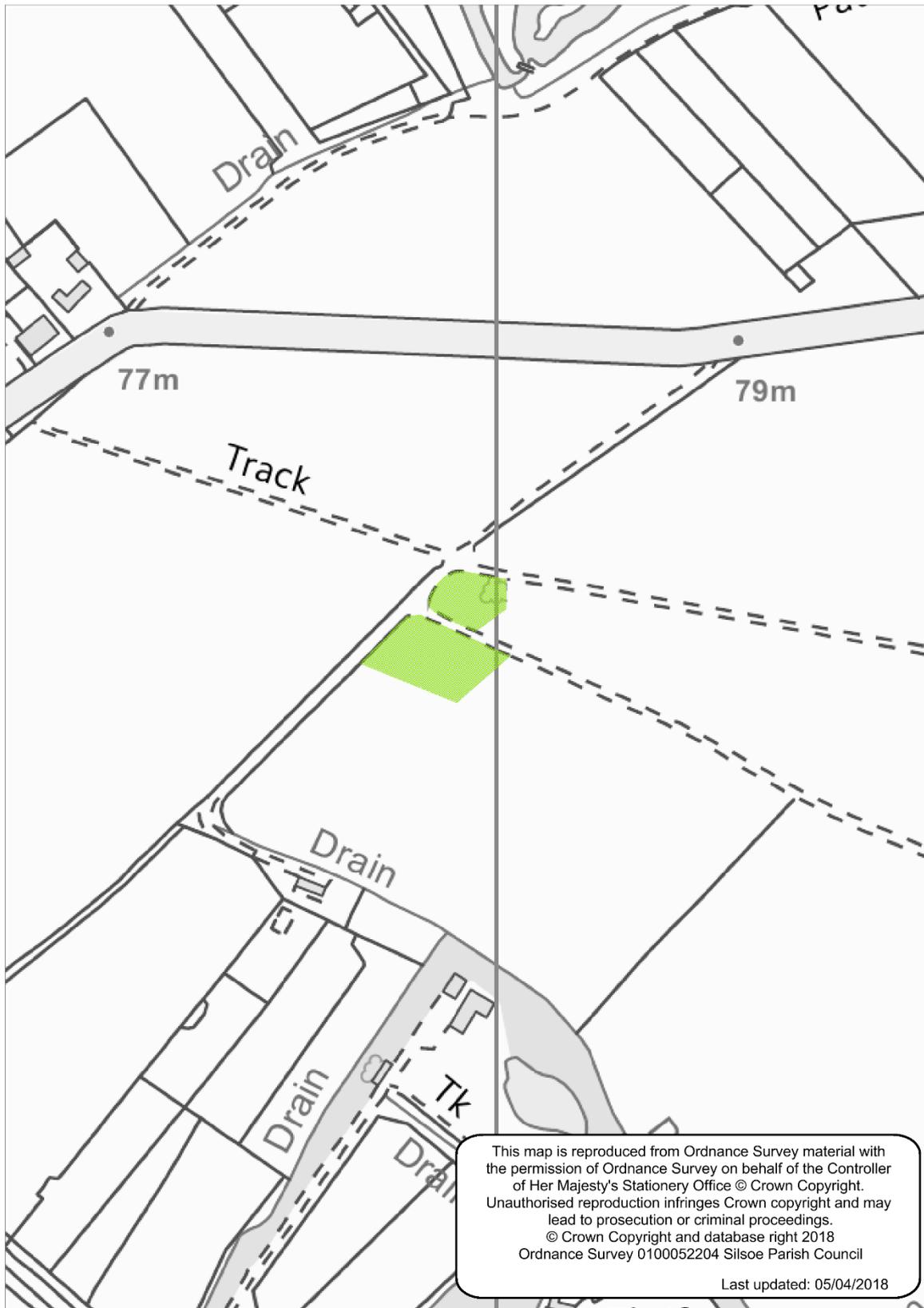


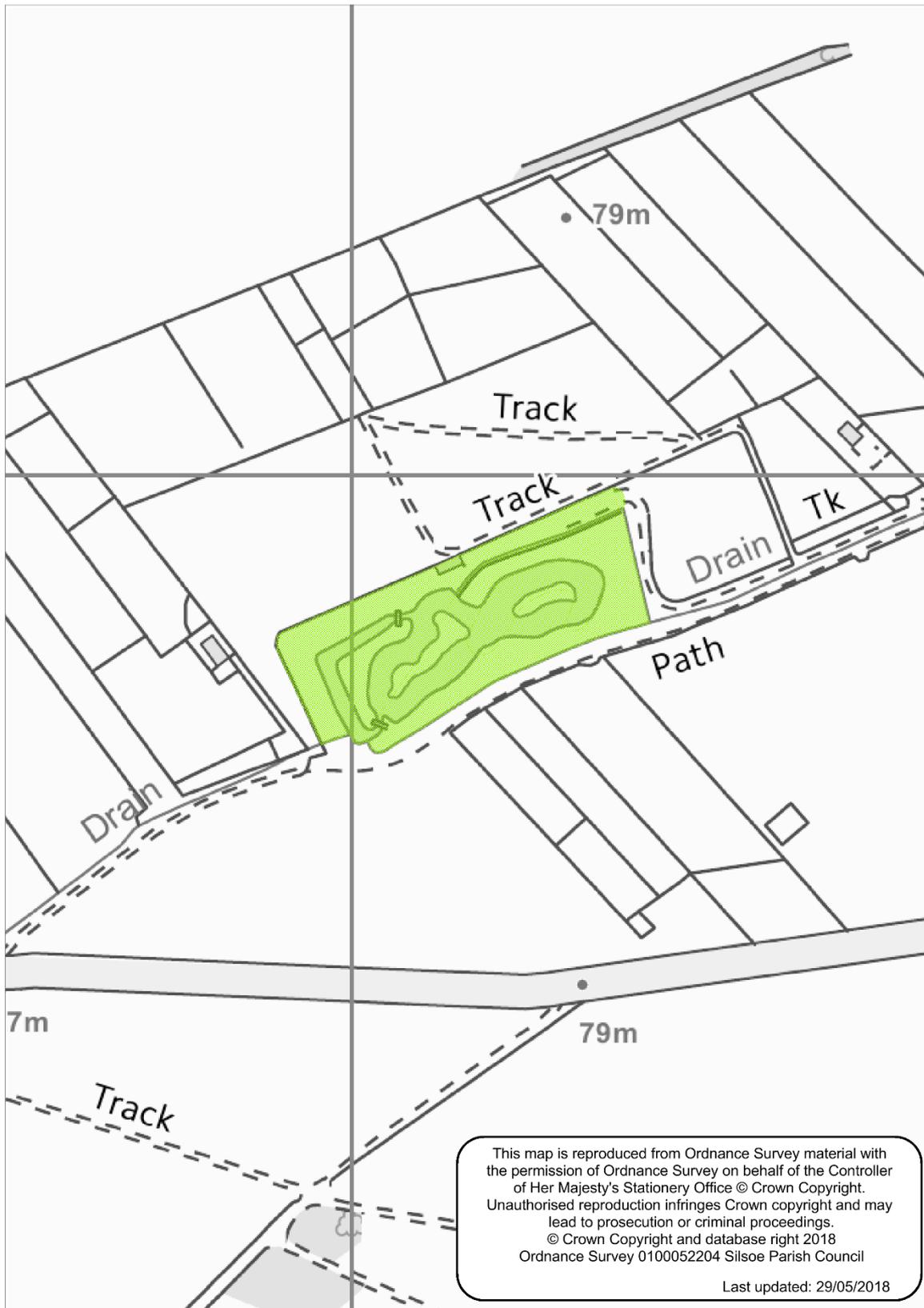
)

18 Thrift Wood CWS



21 Woodland (Wardhedges)



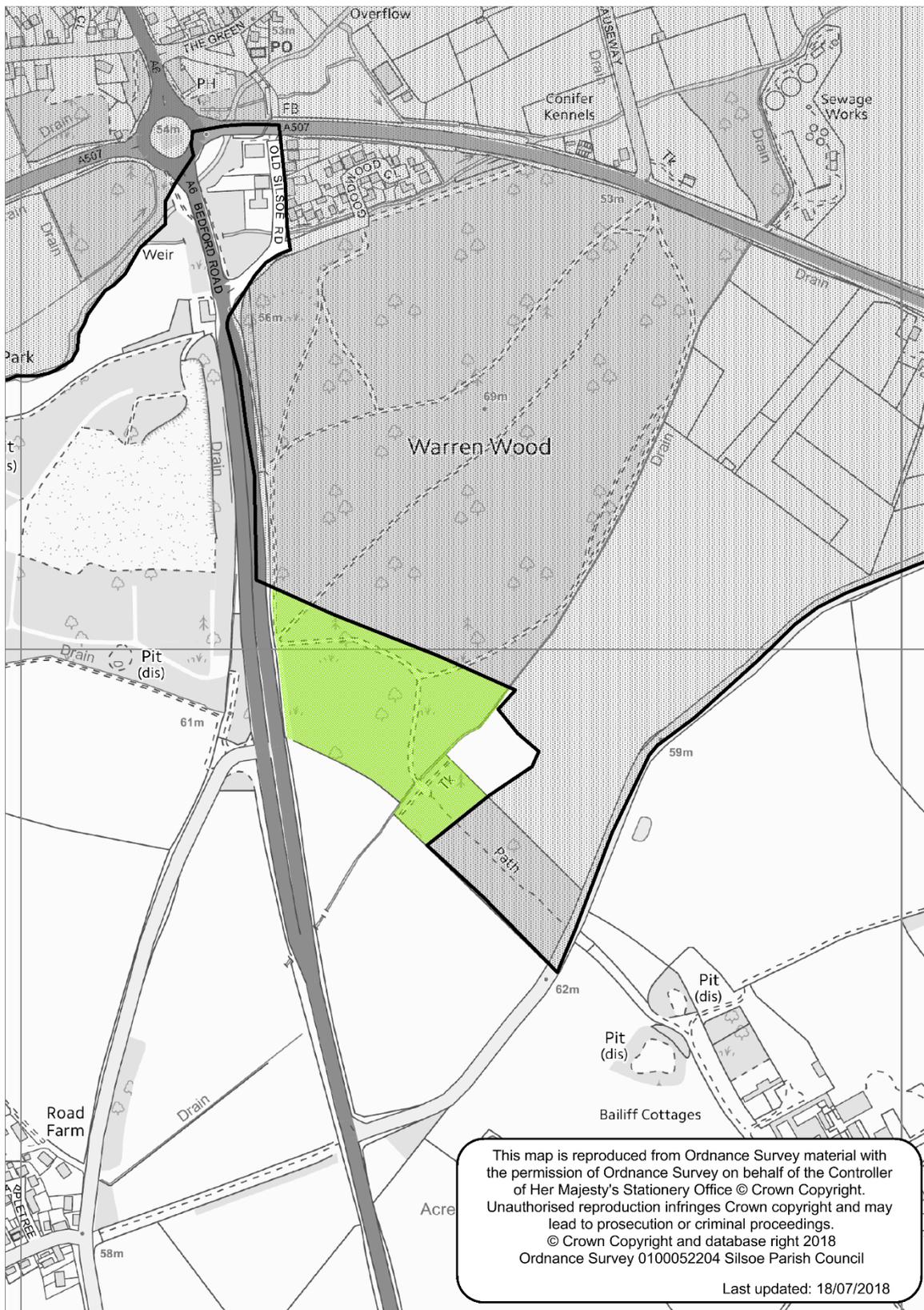




25 Simpsonhill Plantation CWS



## 26 Warren Wood

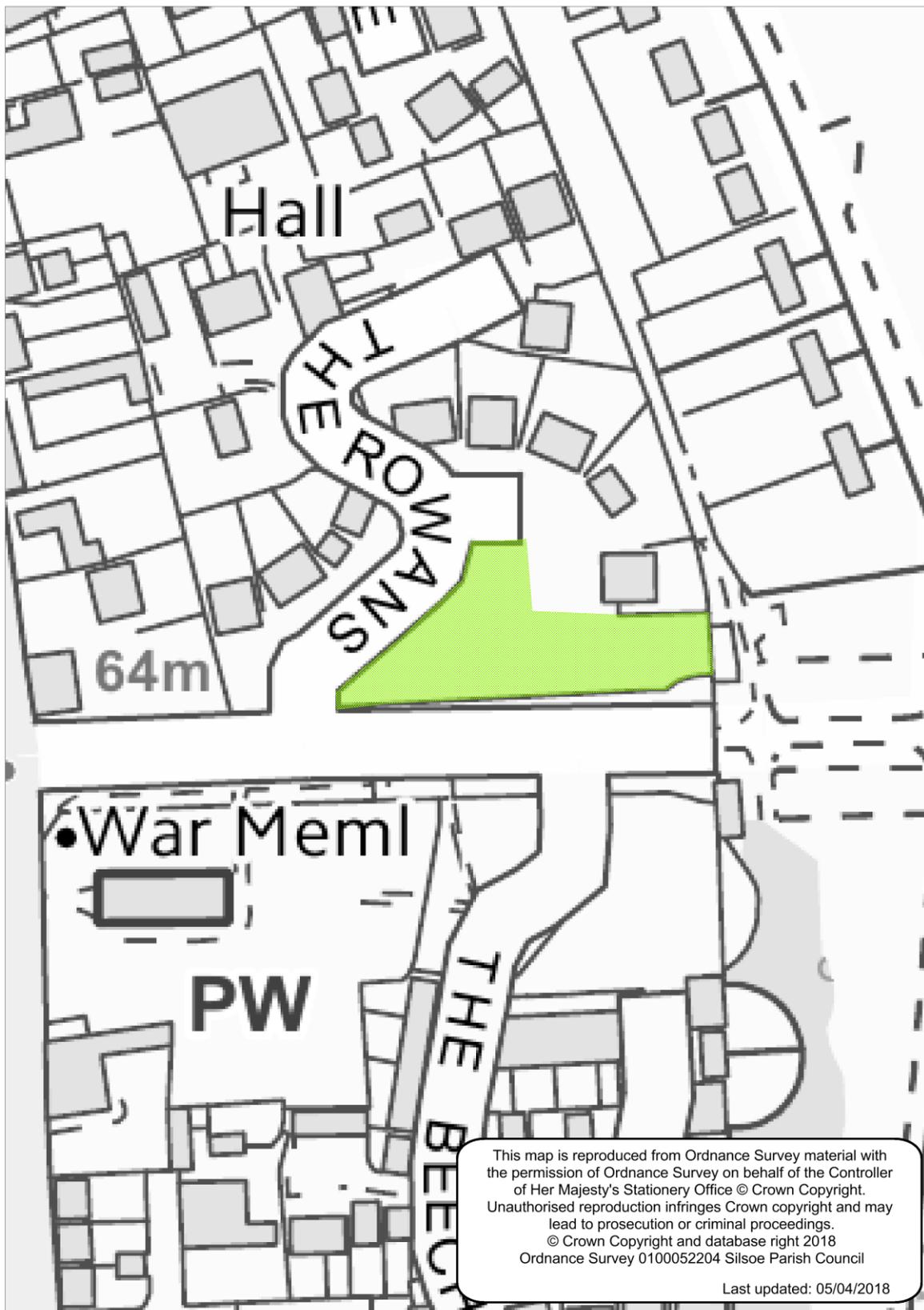


34 Orchard (The Beeches)



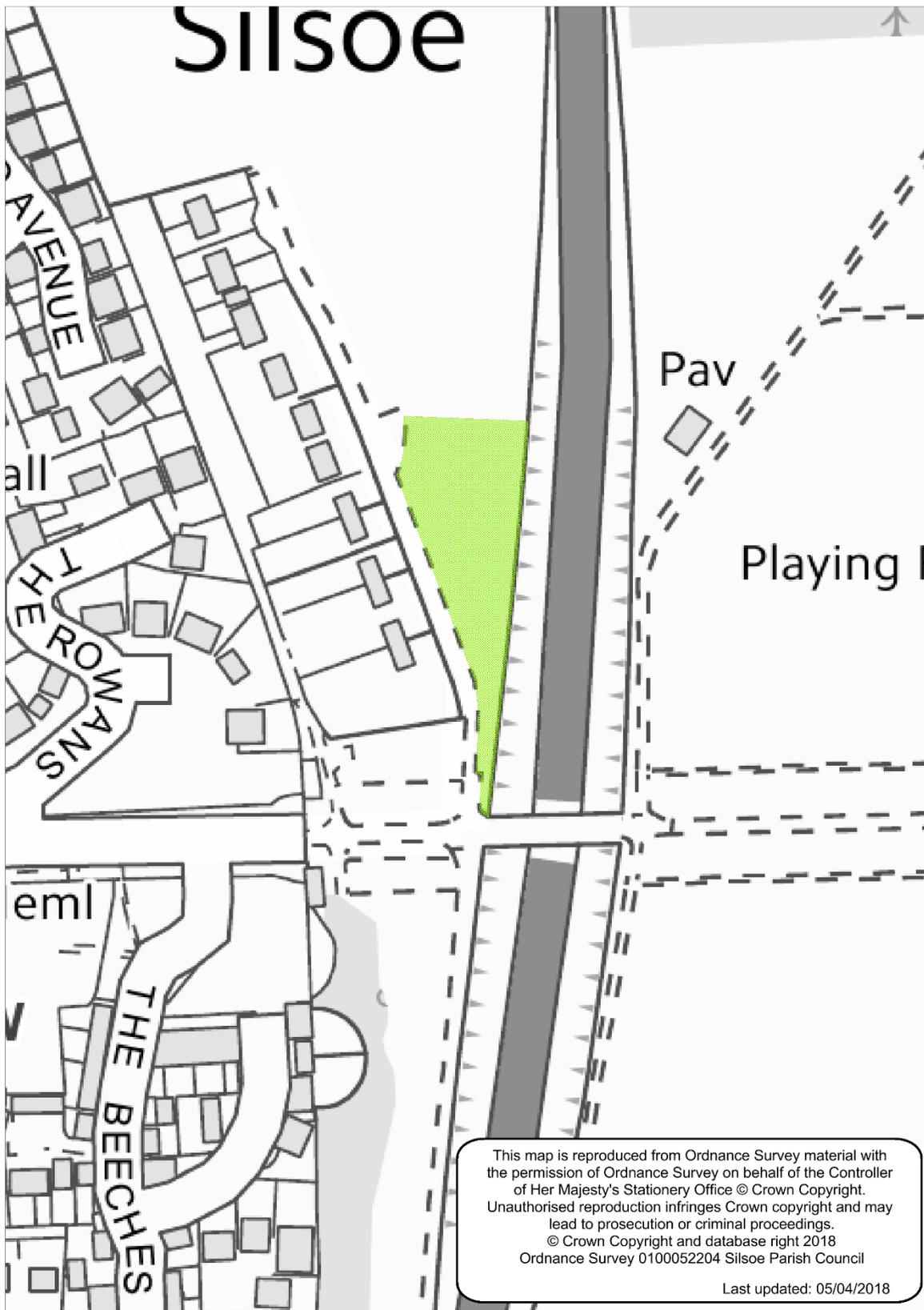
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Last updated: 05/04/2018



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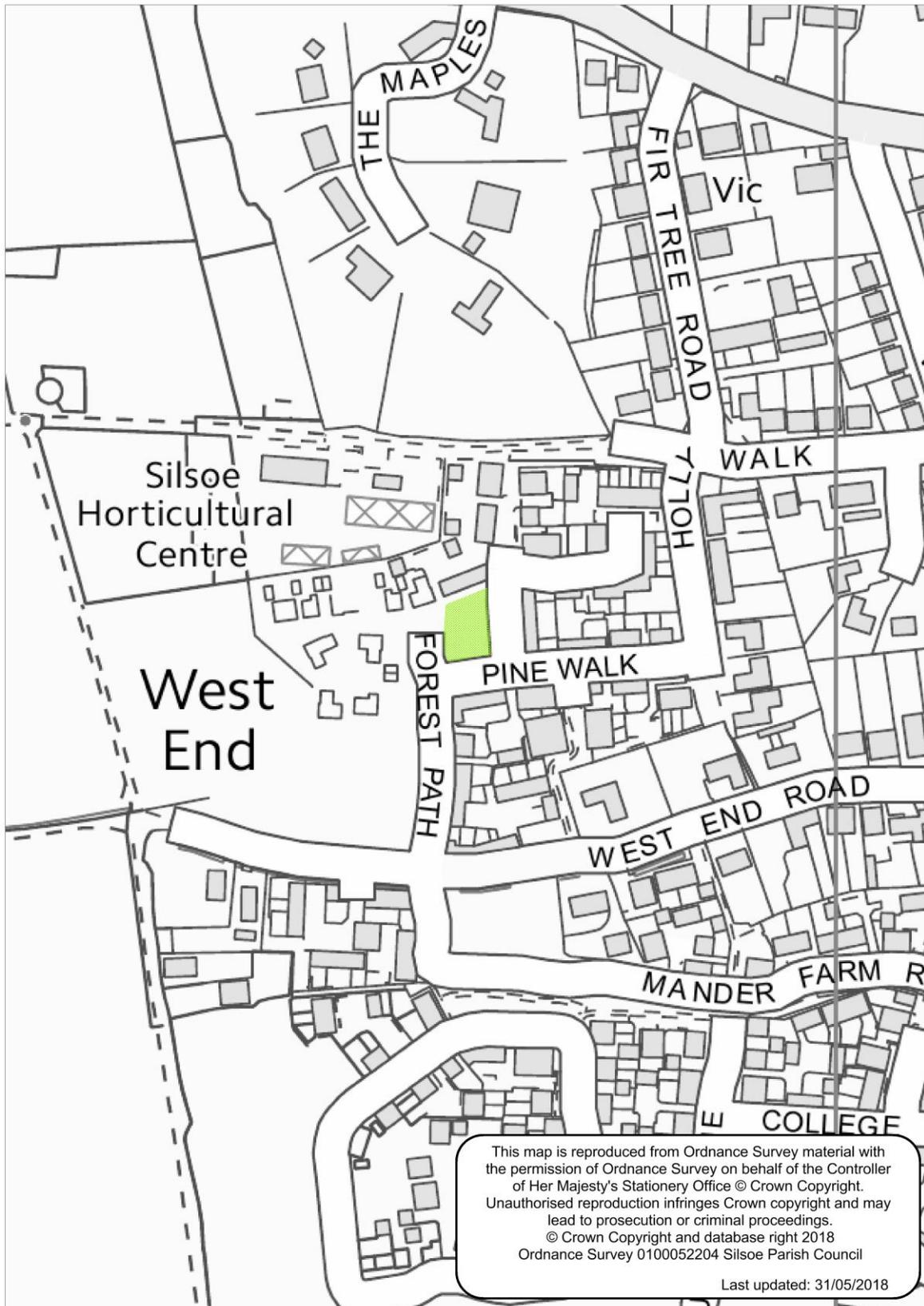
Last updated: 05/04/2018



37 Hawthorn Way Gault Pit



39 Forest Path Play Area



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Last updated: 18/07/2018

#### **Environment Policy SNP/EP-2**

- Development should be avoided in areas at risk of flooding. Where development is necessary, it should be made safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Solutions incorporating SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems) will be supported.

#### **Environment Policy SNP/EP-3**

- The protection, buffering and/or enhancement of biodiversity assets and networks, especially along the Flit Valley, the protection and enhancement of hedgerows, and the linking of areas of biodiversity value to create more robust networks, will be supported. Buffer in this instance means to create habitation immediately adjacent to key sites, to help protect the “core” of the site from wider impacts and the effects of isolation.

#### **Environment Policy SNP/EP-4**

- New development must respect its landscape setting. New development within the setting of the AONB should demonstrate how it will conserve and enhance the AONB’s special qualities.

#### **Environment Policy SNP/EP-5**

- The protection and / or enhancement of public rights of way, especially the creation of circular routes and the development of the Flit Valley Walk will be supported.

## 9 EMPLOYMENT & ECONOMY

9.1 Silsoe Parish has a thriving commercial community which includes farms and small-holdings, a small number of shops and services within the village itself, further businesses located outside the village centre, an industrial estate positioned alongside the stately home, Wrest Park, and businesses located within the Grade One listed building itself.

9.2 The location is ideal for businesses as it is easily accessible from the A6, A421 and A507, with good links to the M1 and A1 via these routes. Flitwick train station is the closest rail link and Luton the closest airport.

9.3 The village has an estate agent, pub, shop, hairdressing salons, Horticultural Institute providing a vital outlet to Central Bedfordshire adults with learning difficulties, a part-time post office located in the Village Hall twice a week, nursing home and numerous self-employed residents working from home. Outside of the village centre yet within our parish, we also have a garden centre and petrol station.

9.4 In Wrest Park itself, an employment area for Central Bedfordshire, the number of businesses totals over 60 and are as varied as haulage, education services, car servicing and a perfumery. Silsoe residents are proud of the heritage of Wrest Park and the history that brings business and history together, yet this can cause some issues to the village – especially with traffic – as shown below.

9.5 On 14<sup>th</sup> September 2011, Confirmation of Article 4 for the Wrest Park Estate was produced – see **Appendix 7**. The Article 4 Direction removed the permitted development of the change of use from Use Class B1 (Business) to Use Class B8 (Storage and Distribution) where the floor space is under 235 square metres. It would not rule out change per se but would require a planning application to be submitted, which would allow the proposal to be considered fully by the Local Planning Authority.

9.6 This potential permitted change of use was of concern because of the number of buildings within the site that could make use of this permitted change. The cumulative effect of such an uncontrolled B8 use within this area may cause harm to the amenities of the local residents, and a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and conservation area as a whole. It is therefore considered that an Article 4 Direction would remove this permitted change of use and bring it under planning control.

9.7 This demonstrates the concerns that CBC have for the amenities of the local residents, and a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and conservation area as a whole, setting a precedent for the value placed on Silsoe.

9.8 Tourism also plays a large part in the employment and economy in Silsoe parish, with the English Heritage site Wrest Park located here. 2017 figures from ALVA, show Wrest Park as 165<sup>th</sup> in Visitor Attractions in the UK, with 137,131 visits – up by 10.3%. This does not include those visiting the coffee shop / restaurant and children's play area, as well as the grounds outside Wrest Park itself which can be visited for free. Although down slightly for 2018 to 128,980, numbers are expected to increase again in 2019.

9.9 Wrest Park is also used as a film location and for special events – including weddings, concerts, outdoor theatre, parties, garden and craft shows. In 2018, they hosted the annual St Georges Weekend in April, the Antiques Roadshow in July and Van Morrison in August amongst other events.

9.10 Business owners from all around our parish that responded to our survey – see our Statement on Community Consultation– appear to live and work locally and have businesses established in Silsoe for 6 years or more. 75% enjoy the good offices and business rates, as well as the attractiveness of the location.

9.11 However, there were some key points made by business owners that came from our survey and lunchtime drop in including, in addition to the mobile phone issues mentioned in 6.14 -

- Silsoe is growing but the infrastructure of doctors and dentists, supermarket etc is not there and Flitwick cannot cope with its own expansion let alone anybody else.
- Put High Street back to the way it was!
- Would like to build at Community Holistic Healing/Health Centre at Wrest Park at some time in the future, which we feel would very much benefit the local community.
- Access to Wrest Park directly from the bypass would make an enormous amount of difference (and would get some residents off our backs!). I realise this is very difficult, but it should be seen as a real opportunity for the village.
- The junction as you exit Wrest Park is dangerous, cars park on the right outside the white house making it impossible to see oncoming traffic until you're already in the road. Surprised the PC has not already recognised this danger and campaigned for yellow lines.
- Sort traffic out and potholes
- Traffic in and out of Wrest Park
- Pathways from bus to Gate House
- Traffic – backed up beyond the bridge between 1630 and 1800
- More shops / doctors
- No added benefit for having Post Office 2x a week
- Sad to see school site is gone – improve traffic as a result
- Grass outside school needs cleaning
- Lack of infrastructure i.e. doctors / dentist
- Got potential to expand but do not know when
- Speed watch are good
- Really miss the Post Office
- Integrate both sides of village – children
- Widen the road in Silsoe centre where it was narrowed. This is more dangerous now than ever. Traffic is heavy, cars are parked in the bottleneck and people do not give way often. Accident waiting to happen.
- Put High Street back to the way it was. School has been moved. Parish Council knew it would be.

- Direct access to WP from the bypass
- Hotel/B&B accommodation
- Access to Wrest Park from A6 to avoid going through the village.
- Better bus service to/from Luton and Bedford
- Post Office and a Takeaway food shop
- Public transport for visitors or potential employees is hopeless
- Business rate is way too high for a business that currently makes little profit

9.12 This shows that some of the issues recognised by residents are echoed by business in Silsoe – namely,

- Better connectivity – mobile and broadband
- Traffic and transport issues
- More shops and services

9.13 As shown in **Appendix 6**, a project to build an access road that takes traffic away from the centre of the village and gives direct access to and from the A6 will help alleviate the traffic concerns in the village. This project has a lot of popularity with villagers and SPC alike and will remain a high priority for the future.

9.14 By resolving these issues for residents and businesses located in Silsoe alike, we draw closer to achieving our Vision taking us towards 2035.

## Employment Economy (SNP/EE) Policies

### **Employment & Economy Policy SNP/EE-1**

- New commercial development must respect local character and residential amenity. It must not result in severe residual cumulative impacts in respect of traffic movements and should not result in harm to highway safety but should seek to minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians.

### **Employment & Economy Policy SNP/EE-2**

- The development of tourism and leisure development in Silsoe which respects local character will be supported. The loss of Silsoe's pubs will not be supported, whereas development that supports their sustainability whilst demonstrating regard for local character and residential amenity will be supported.

# 10 TRANSPORT

10.1 As mentioned in Chapter 2, Silsoe was bypassed by the A6 in 1981, taking significant traffic movement away from the High Street.

10.2 Ideally situated, between Bedford and Luton with good connections from the A421 and A507 to the M1 and A1, as mentioned in Chapter 9, Silsoe offers businesses and commuters an ideal position to be based from.

10.3 Connecting businesses and residents to services in and around Central Bedfordshire is important to us and offering alternatives to commuting by car will be key to a sustainable future.

10.4 From our research, it became clear that traffic into and out of the village causes residents and businesses significant issues. For example –

- Traffic (84.6%) was the key concern of respondents in the resident’s survey - 26% said that they have big concerns over the traffic in Silsoe – using Silsoe as a “Rat Run” to avoid the A6 and Clophill roundabout, congestion and speeding being the key concerns
- In addition to the comments made in 9.11, better transportation to grow business was also mentioned in the business survey

10.5 Projects – as laid out in **Appendix 6** – highlight the importance of a new access road directly to and from the A6 to the Wrest Park employment area which would alleviate some of the traffic issues within Silsoe.

10.6 As we know from the CBC Local Plan, there are three main transport concerns which affect Central Bedfordshire, and this is of a key concern to Silsoe too, affecting the development of our Transport policies -

- Capacity - there is a concern in Silsoe that the current road network does not have the capacity to cope with the commercial, leisure and business traffic going to and from Wrest Park and Newbury Farm
- Connectivity - in common with many Central Bedfordshire communities, Silsoe residents travel long distances to meet their needs. As the village has increased in size over the last 6 years, we now have increased commuting traffic, as well as the above-mentioned commercial, leisure and business traffic going in and out of the village. Sustainable transport provision is poor – with limited bus services and cycle paths, bridleways and footpath provision often in disrepair that would help reduce car use. Links to other villages and service centres could be better.
- Communities - Inappropriate routing and adherence to routing of traffic, including HGVs, through the historic centre of the village is causing wide-scale concern around safety, speeding and congestion – particularly at peak times, as well as concerns over poor air quality and damage to buildings through subsidence. There is reliance on car use by residents due to lack of appropriate alternatives, as mentioned above.

## Transport (SNP/TP) Policies

### **Transport Policy SNP/TP-1**

- Wherever more than five parking spaces are provided there should be at least one charging point for electric vehicles.

## Glossary & Abbreviations

<b>Affordable Housing</b>	Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the housing market. Generally provided by housing associations, working in partnership with CBC.
<b>AONB</b>	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - an outstanding landscape whose distinctive character and natural beauty are so precious that it is designated to safeguard it in the national interest, protected under the 1949 National Parks and Access to Countryside Act. Its protection is further enhanced by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000 (CRoW2000)
<b>Asset of Community Value</b>	An asset of community value is land or property of importance to a local community which is subject to additional protection from development under the Localism Act 2011. Voluntary and community organisations can nominate an asset to be included on their local authority's register of asset of community value.
<b>Brownfield site</b>	Abandoned, closed or under-used industrial or commercial facilities
<b>CBC</b>	Central Bedfordshire Council, the relevant local authority responsible for all planning matters.
<b>CBC Mid Bedfordshire Local plan 2005 saved policies.</b>	This local plan was the development plan for the Mid- Bedfordshire area (and which covered the Wrestlingworth and Cockayne Hatley area) which was in force before the Local Plan in 2009 but from which there are still “saved policies” which are still in force, but not up to date.
<b>CBCLP</b>	Central Bedfordshire Council Local Plan. At the time of the publication of this Silsoe Neighbourhood Plan, Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) has submitted a new Local Plan.
<b>Conservation Area</b>	An area of notable environmental or historical interest or importance which is protected by law against undesirable changes.
<b>Core Strategy &amp; Development Management Policies 2009</b>	The Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 2009 which is the development plan for the area within which Silsoe lies, which is still in force at the time that the NP is published.
<b>CWS</b>	County Wildlife Site
<b>Development</b>	In planning terminology, development means any new building, any alteration to a building, or change of use of land or building.
<b>Dwelling</b>	A house, flat, or other place of residence
<b>GI Plan</b>	Green Infrastructure Plan – Silsoe has a new updated one (2018) to accompany the SNP
<b>HCA</b>	Homes and Communities Agency
<b>HE Policies</b>	Historic Environment Policies
<b>Heritage asset</b>	An NPPF definition - a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)

<b>Historic England - HE</b>	Formally English Heritage
<b>Historic environment</b>	An NPPF definition - all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.
<b>Listed Building</b>	A building that has been placed on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest
<b>Local Community Space</b>	Space valued by the local community, both for the environmental and social benefits it brings
<b>Local Green Space</b>	Designating areas as Local Green Space is a way to provide special protection for green areas of particular importance to local communities.
<b>NA</b>	Neighbourhood Area is the area that is covered by the Neighbourhood Plan. The Silsoe Neighbourhood Area, which is the same as the area defined by the Silsoe Parish boundary, was designated by Central Bedfordshire Council in December 2016.
<b>NP</b>	Neighbourhood Plan brought forward under the Localism Act 2011.
<b>NPSC</b>	Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee. For the Silsoe NP, the Steering Committee comprised a group of Parish Councillors, volunteers and specialists who came together under the umbrella of the Parish Council, to produce the NP.
<b>NPPF</b>	National Planning Policy Framework; the Central Government overall planning policy document which includes topic based policies, with which the Neighbourhood Plan has to comply.
<b>Settlement Boundary</b>	Settlement boundaries are an essential tool for the management of development, principally to prevent the encroachment of development into the countryside
<b>Significance (for heritage policy)</b>	An NPPF definition - The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.
<b>SLS</b>	Silsoe Lower School
<b>SNP</b>	Silsoe Neighbourhood Plan
<b>SNPSC</b>	Silsoe Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee
<b>SP</b>	Standard Policies
<b>SPC</b>	Silsoe Parish Council
<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment - SEA</b>	All land use plans likely to have effects upon the environment are required to undergo this process to comply with European Directive 2001/42/EC concerning Strategic Environmental Assessment. A "scoping" report is initially produced followed by a full report which is produced alongside the Plan. The Local Planning Authority can decide that this is not required and can provide the NP with a decision as to why.
<b>Strategic Gap</b>	The space between settlements which protects individual settlements' unique identity

<b>Sustainable Development</b>	The NP must deliver sustainable development. A definition of sustainable development is “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.
<b>Tree Preservation Order - TPO</b>	A TPO is made by a Local Planning Authority to protect specific trees or an area, group or woodland from deliberate damage and destruction. TPOs can prevent the felling, lopping, topping, uprooting or otherwise willful damaging of trees without the permission of the Local Planning Authority.
<b>Vernacular</b>	Is a category of architecture based on local needs, construction materials and reflecting local traditions.
<b>Village Centre</b>	The Village Centre in Silsoe is classed as the Conservation areas clustered around the High Street – as illustrated in <b>Illustration 3a</b>
<b>Windfall</b>	Sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available.

# Appendices

**APPENDIX 1 DECISION NOTICE**

**APPENDIX 2 BRCC HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY – MAY 2016**

**APPENDIX 3 SILSOE NP SEA SCREENING REPORT**

**APPENDIX 4 HERITAGE & NON-HERITAGE ASSETS LIST FOR SILSOE PARISH 2018**

**APPENDIX 5 88 BEDS AND CAMBS CLAYLANDS**

**APPENDIX 6 POTENTIAL CIL OR SECTION 106 PROJECTS AUGUST 2018**

**APPENDIX 7 CONFIRMATION OF ARTICLE 4 - WREST PARK ESTATE WREST PARK SILSOE**

**APPENDIX 8 IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW (IMR) PROJECT PLAN**

## Supporting Information

**SI1 CHILTERN AONB SETTING POSITION STATEMENT ADOPTED JUNE 2011 (REV 1)**

## Accompanying Documents

**BASIC CONDITIONS STATEMENT**

**STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

**VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT**

**GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN 2018**

**RESPONSES TO EXAMINER REPORT**

**SILSOE FINAL EXAMINERS REPORT JULY 2019**