The Great and Little Chesterford

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

A Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Parishes of Great and Little Chesterford

2019 to 2033

Made version - February 2023

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(Cover page photos: Great Chesterford village sign, looking north from Susan's Hill across the Roman Temple, Carmen Street Paddocks looking west and the bridge over the Cam at Little Chesterford) (Back page photo – a red kite over the Chesterfords).

Aerial shots of Little and Great Chesterford. All aerial photography with thanks to Tim Chapman Aerial Photography Solutions.

Other photographs reproduced with kind permission from Jane Gilbey, Joanne Joyce, Colin Day, Jon Beard and others in the community.

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*To view the content of these figures in further detail please refer to the online version which can be found at https://udc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?webmap=81ed3ba58e644c949fd41449119fdf01

A note of thanks:

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has worked incredibly hard in producing this Neighbourhood Plan, regarding which both the communities of Great Chesterford and Little Chesterford should be very proud.

We have also been blessed with assistance and engagement from our wonderful community and this Neighbourhood Plan should serve us all well in securing sustainable growth, protecting the environment and the landscape we so cherish, preserving the heritage we so uniquely enjoy and building and maintain thriving community facilities.

Particular thanks have to go to my colleagues on the Steering Group without the time sacrifice and dedication of whom this simply would not have happened – Fiona Wilkinson, Julie Redfern, Hannah Helliar and Rachel Thackray . Additional thanks to Nick Burton for his tireless assistance in producing the wonderful maps and plans.

Thank you all

Tom Newcombe
Chair, Great Chesterford Parish Council

Photo 1 - Daffodils

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 This is the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan 2019–2033. The plan covers the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan Area which was formally designated in June 2015.

1.2 The Neighbourhood Plan Area comprises the two separate civil parishes of Great Chesterford and Little Chesterford.

Photo 2 – Rainbow over Carmen Street Paddocks

About Neighbourhood Plans

1.3 Neighbourhood Development Plans were introduced in the Localism Act (2011) and came into force in April 2012. Along with the Local Plan, they form part of the Development Plan for an area. Their intention is to give communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development of their local area.

1.4 Decisions on planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. A Neighbourhood Plan therefore provides an important framework for how communities should grow in the coming years.

1.5 Although the Government's intention is for local people to decide what goes on in their Neighbourhood Plan Area, the Localism Act sets out some key restrictions. One of these is that all Neighbourhood Plans must meet four basic conditions:

- General conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan.

- Having regard to national policies (i.e., the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 [NPPF]), and guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- Compliance with EU regulations on human rights and environmental standards.
- The plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.

1.6 In addition, the Localism Act allows Neighbourhood Plans to provide more houses than allocated in the Local Plan, but not fewer.

1.7 Neighbourhood plans allow communities to create a suite of policies that complement existing local, national and strategic planning policy, and also to provide additional detail and subtlety that reflect the special characteristics of an area that cannot reasonably be addressed by higher-level policy. They can also help to secure the infrastructure that is needed to support growth and protect the areas, landmarks and services that are most important to communities.

Photo 3 – Little Chesterford Village Hall

About the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan

1.8 This Neighbourhood Plan establishes a vision for the evolution and long-term sustainability of Great and Little Chesterford. It sets out a vision for the future of the area, along with objectives and a series of policies that will be used to determine planning applications within the parishes. It will be used to govern land use and development from 2019–2033. The Parish Councils of Great and Little Chesterford will periodically review this Plan during the Plan period and determine whether updates are required.

1.9 The Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan is being produced by the Parish Councils of Great Chesterford and Little Chesterford on behalf of the communities. The boundary of the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan, which was formally designated by Uttlesford District Council (UDC) on 18 June 2015, is shown in Figure 1.1 below:

Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan Area

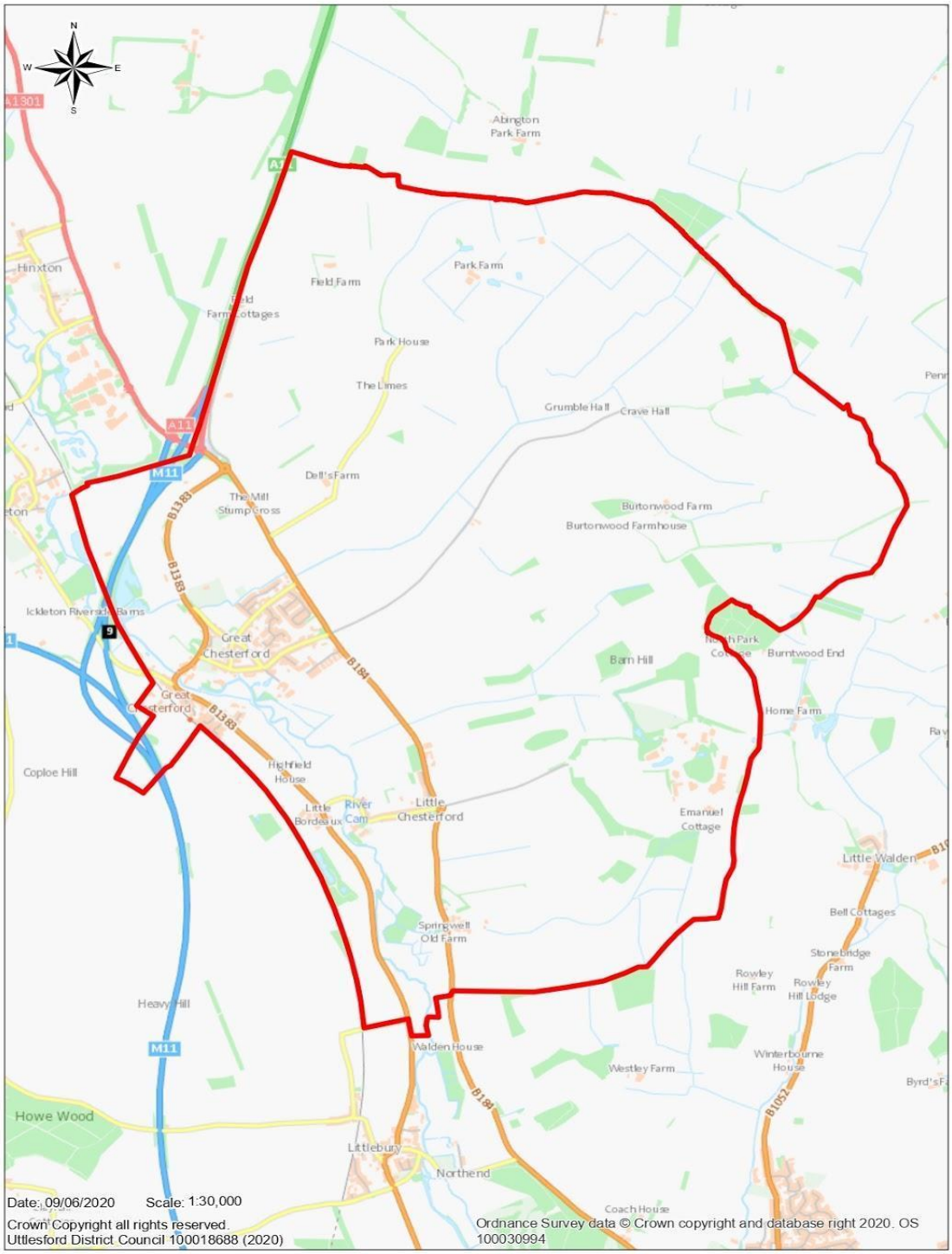

Figure 1.1 Map of the Great and Little Chesterford Plan Area, provided by Uttlesford District Council
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version here]

1.10 The Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was established in 2015 by the Parish Councils of Great Chesterford and Little Chesterford. The Steering Group has focused on producing a Neighbourhood Plan for the parishes which secures the villages' future and conserves their heritage. This has been done in the context of a vision for the Neighbourhood Plan Area and has been locally led throughout.

1.11 The Steering Group has comprised a mix of residents and Parish Councillors and these have been partially rotated throughout the process, which has helped to ensure a level of engagement and enthusiasm of which we are very proud.

1.12 The Steering Group has been supported in its work by Rachel Hogger as the professional representative from UDC, and financial support has been drawn from a UDC grant.

1.13 In addition to the Steering Group, which has led the project and taken strategic decisions in the formation of the Plan, a Working Group was established in November 2018. Members of the Working Group comprised volunteers from both villages who were tasked with reviewing the outcome of the village consultations and drafting outline content for the main policy areas. Many other residents have contributed in different ways.

The Local Plan Context

1.14 Uttlesford District Council (UDC) adopted the current Local Plan in 2005. The NPPF has superseded it in many respects, but in the absence of a more up-to-date adopted Local Plan, it is the 2005 plan with which this Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity.

1.15 UDC began work on another Local Plan in 2015. In early 2016, Great Chesterford Parish Council (GCPC) became aware that land in the east of Great Chesterford Parish could be selected as the site of a major new settlement – to become known as North Uttlesford Garden Community (NUGC).

1.16 GCPC, together with Little Chesterford Parish Council, objected to the appropriateness of the proposal, submitting in April 2016 detailed objections to UDC relating, in particular, to significant heritage and landscape considerations and inadequacies in the local transport infrastructure.

1.17 Once UDC announced its intention to include the site in its emerging draft Local Plan, the Parish Councils amplified, with the support of expert evidence, their objections to the NUGC proposal throughout the Regulation 18 and 19 consultations that followed. GCPC repeated these concerns to the Planning Inspectors following submission of the draft Local Plan to the Secretary of State for examination. Details of the submissions can be found at http://uttlesford.gov.uk/local-plan-examination

1.18 In January 2020, the Inspectors informed UDC that they had considered that the Garden Communities proposed by UDC were insufficiently justified, and that the proposed Local Plan could not be regarded as sound. In relation to NUGC the Inspectors concluded: "The North Uttlesford Garden Community is flawed in terms of landscape and heritage impacts and the potential for the A505 improvements and public transport infrastructure are uncertain, undermining the potential for this Garden Community to be a sustainable place." In light of the many barriers to NUGC's development identified by the Inspectors, and their view that it would perform least well against required Garden Community principles, they suggested that it should be deleted from the draft Local Plan.

1.19 In October 2020, the Cabinet of Uttlesford District Council approved a new Local Development Scheme which outlined the timetable for the production of the new Local Plan by 2024.

At the time of writing (March 2022), the preparatory work is almost complete and the evidence base prepared; but the Regulation 18 Plan has not yet been published for consultation.

1.20 While UDC works on the new Local Plan, this Neighbourhood Plan is considered to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the adopted Local Plan of 2005.

Strategic Environmental Assessment / Habitats Regulations Assessment

1.21 Neighbourhood Plans must be in line with European Regulations on strategic environmental assessment and habitat regulations. UDC are responsible for determining the requirement for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA).

1.22 In order to succeed at examination, the Neighbourhood Plan must contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF as a whole constitutes the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice for planning. The NPPF explains there are three overarching objectives for sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

1.23 The Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan will, when completed, be accompanied by a Basic Conditions Statement, which will demonstrate in detail how the Great and Little Chesterford Plan will contribute to achieving the Government's sustainable development objectives.

1.24 The Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan is intended to set out a local blueprint for how Great and Little Chesterford should develop sustainably in the best interests of the villages, in the context of wider local and national planning policy.

1.25 Neighbourhood plans are restricted to dealing with matters relating to land use and development planning (excluding the County Matters of minerals and waste), and therefore many other important non-planning matters cannot be included in the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan. Chapter 6 of this Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan records the non-planning concerns raised by the community, and both Parish Councils will undertake to tackle these issues using other means where possible.

Independent Examination

1.26 In June 2021, Uttlesford District Council assisted Great Chesterford Parish Council with the process for appointing an independent examiner.

1.27 On 30 August 2021, Great and Little Chesterford Parish Council informed Uttlesford District Council of their preferred choice for the independent examiner, and UDC confirmed that they would start the examiner procurement process.

Independent Health Check

1.28 In January 2022, this Neighbourhood Plan, along with supporting evidence including the Consultation Statement and Basic Conditions Statement, were submitted for an Independent Health Check. The funding for this was obtained via a Locality grant and the Independent Health Check was undertaken by a highly experienced examiner who was consulting for Intelligent Plans and Examinations (IPE) Ltd.

The examiner issued a full report and made a series of recommendations. He concluded that "the time and effort that has clearly been put into the Plan to date is noteworthy. The Plan is logical and straightforward in its structure and if it can be amended with regard to the above suggestions then it will have an increased likelihood of ultimately being submitted for a successful Examination."

The Steering Group reviewed the recommendations in detail, taking full note of the advice contained therein, and updated the Plan accordingly.

Photo 4 – Typical flint wall

Working with Uttlesford District Council

1.29 The Steering Group has sought to keep UDC appraised of progress with this Plan, either via the independent consultant appointed by UDC or directly.

1.30 This has included invitation to engage with:

- Housing Land assessment work
- Site selection work
- Local Green Space work
- First full draft informal consultation
- Regulation 14 (pre-submission) Consultation
- Meeting post Regulation 14 feedback (May 2021)
- Updated Plan post Regulation 14 feedback
- Updated Plan post independent health check
- Meeting post independent health check (Mar 2022)

Chapter 2 – Context of Great and Little Chesterford

Location and History

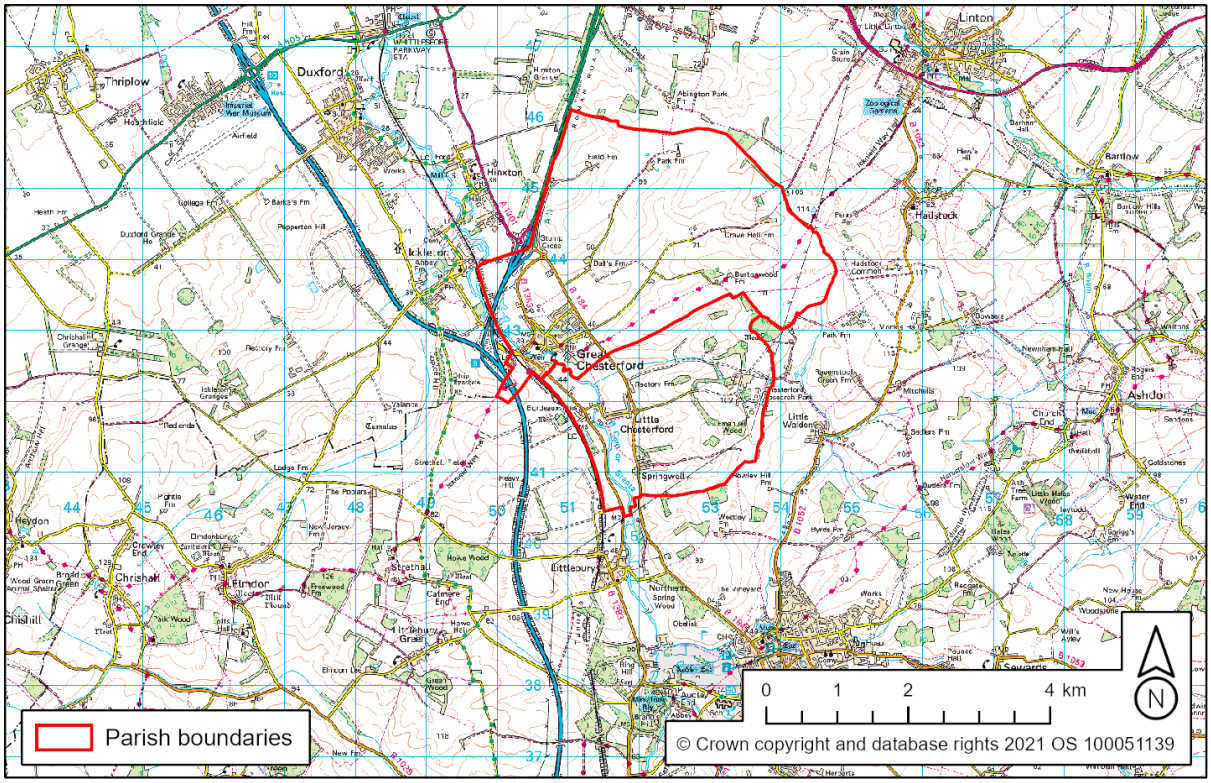

Figure 2.1 The parishes of Great and Little Chesterford
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version here]

2.1 Great Chesterford and Little Chesterford are villages and civil parishes in the Uttlesford district of Essex. Little Chesterford village is located less than a mile south-east of the village of Great Chesterford and the parish incorporates the hamlet of Springwell to the south, as well as Chesterford Park (now called Chesterford Research Park) to the east.

2.2 Great and Little Chesterford are located within the River Cam valley, between the B184 Walden Road/Springwell Road and the B1383 London Road. The Plan area boundary extends north to the southern edge of Hildersham Wood (Hinxton parish in Cambridgeshire), east to Great Chesterford Common (Hadstock parish in Essex), south-east beyond Chesterford Research Park (Saffron Walden parish in Essex) and south to just below Springwell Farm (Littlebury parish in Essex). The western boundary of the parishes is, for the majority of its length, defined by the Cambridge to London mainline railway. However, to the west of Great Chesterford, the boundary extends west beyond the railway to incorporate Smock Mill House and a section of the M11 motorway.

2.3 The nearest villages are Ickleton, 1 mile to the west; Hinxton, 2 miles to the north-west; Littlebury, 2 miles to the south; Little Walden, 2 miles to the south-east; and Hadstock, 3.3 miles to the east.

2.4 Great and Little Chesterford are situated approximately 3–4 miles north of Saffron Walden, accessed via the B184, which forms the eastern boundary of both villages, and 11 miles south of Cambridge.

2.5 Archaeological evidence suggests that the land around Great and Little Chesterford has been inhabited from the Palaeolithic period onwards. There was a substantial Late Iron Age settlement on the site of the current village of Great Chesterford, with a shrine located approximately a kilometre away to the north-east (shown on Figure 5.18); Bronze and Iron Age artefacts have also been found in Little Chesterford.

2.6 A Roman fort was constructed at Great Chesterford in the first century AD, possibly as a consequence of the Boudiccan revolt in AD 60 or in recognition of the settlement's strategic position between the territories of the Catuvellauni, Trinovantes and Iceni tribes. There is also evidence of at least three Romano-British homesteads in the grounds of Chesterford Park.

2.7 In the fourth century, Great Chesterford became one of only two walled towns in Essex, the other being Colchester. The name of the Romano-British town is unknown, but Civitas Ikelorum has been suggested based on a particular find.

2.8 There is evidence of a large, settled Saxon population at Great Chesterford from the end of the Roman period, and it was during this time that the village acquired its name Cestreforda or 'the ford by the camp'. There is evidence for a Saxon cemetery in Little Chesterford, in the form of metal-detecting finds, but the precise location is not known.

2.9 The Domesday Book records Great Chesterford in 1086 as a settlement with a total of 53 households; the entry for Little Chesterford records 27 households.

2.10 Following the Norman Conquest, Great Chesterford became a royal manor, with its occupants holding right of copyhold. The village was reasonably prosperous during the medieval period, largely due to the cloth trade (cloth was cleaned or 'fulled' at the water mill), and hosted a weekly market (which may have been held near the site of what is now the Crown and Thistle public house). Great Chesterford Park was sited on the north-eastern edge of the parish, the park boundary still survives. By 1635 the village was being used as a staging post for the Newmarket Races, often used by Charles I.

2.11 The small settlement of Springwell is first mentioned in 1506.

2.12 From the sixteenth century until 1840, Chesterford Park in Little Chesterford was a major farm with an estate in the region of 3,200 acres. Evaluations and monitoring on the Chesterford Park site have revealed post-medieval ditches and nineteenth-century garden features. The current Chesterford Park house was built from 1840 on the site of an earlier farm which dated from c.1700 but burnt down around 1840.

2.13 The post-medieval period was a period of decline for Great Chesterford, mainly because of the collapse of the cloth trade. The turn-piking of the road link with Newmarket and Cambridge and the coming of the London –Cambridge railway in the mid nineteenth century encouraged limited development along Station Road. Outside the medieval and post-medieval village, the settlement of the wider parish was very sparse. Great Chesterford is one of the few areas of Essex that retained its strip fields until the Enclosure Acts of 1804. Saffron gardens were a notable feature of the local economy.

2.14 Chesterford Park, Little Chesterford was a manor house until around 1925–36 when it was unoccupied and fell into disrepair. It was used as a hospital and ammunition store during the Second World War, until an explosion caused it to close. It again fell into disrepair until

it was sold in 1952, when it was developed into a research and development facility for a series of owners including Boots, Fisons, Aventis and Schering.

2.15 During the Second World War, Great and Little Chesterford again gained a military role, being adjacent to the GCHQ Defence Line, an anti-tank defence line which crossed the whole country and entered Essex at Great Chesterford.

2.16 Expansion in Great Chesterford has taken place in the second half of the twentieth century, chiefly on the north-eastern side, with industrial development along London Road.

Character

2.17 Great and Little Chesterford have a number of heritage assets including two Scheduled Monuments (comprising four sites) and the historic core of Great Chesterford village itself, much of which is designated as a Conservation Area.

2.18 In Great Chesterford the surviving portions of the walled Roman town, the fort, the Romano-British temple and the area of the main Roman and Saxon cemeteries are Scheduled Monuments, denoting their historical and archaeological national importance. As already noted, Great Chesterford was one of only two walled Roman towns in Essex, and the Romano-Celtic temple is one of only approximately 150 sites to have been recorded in England. Most of the medieval and post-medieval settlement lies within the Conservation Area. There are no Scheduled Monuments within Little Chesterford; however, two Scheduled Monuments (comprising the Moated Site in Paddock Wood and the Moated site, fish-pond and enclosure at Bordeaux Farm – as shown on Figure 5.18) are adjacent to the parish boundary on the east and west side respectively.

Figure 2.2 Aerial view of Scheduled Romano-Celtic temple overlooking Great Chesterford

2.19 Great Chesterford developed as a nucleated village centred on its historic core, with housing restricted to the western side of the B184 and the eastern side of the railway line

(which forms the western edge of the development limit). There are also natural boundaries to the north and the south of Great Chesterford, provided by the line between the Scheduled Monuments of the Roman temple and Roman settlement in the north and the separation zone between the villages in the south. In the second half of the twentieth century, growth in Great Chesterford has taken place mainly on the north-eastern side of the village, on the land south of Jacksons Lane and north of the High Street (e.g., Spencer Road, Pilgrim Close, Rookery Close, Bartholomew Close, Stanley Road, The Elms and Four Acres), as well as north of Jacksons Lane (Meadow Road and Hyll Close). This settlement pattern is illustrated in Figure 2.3 below.

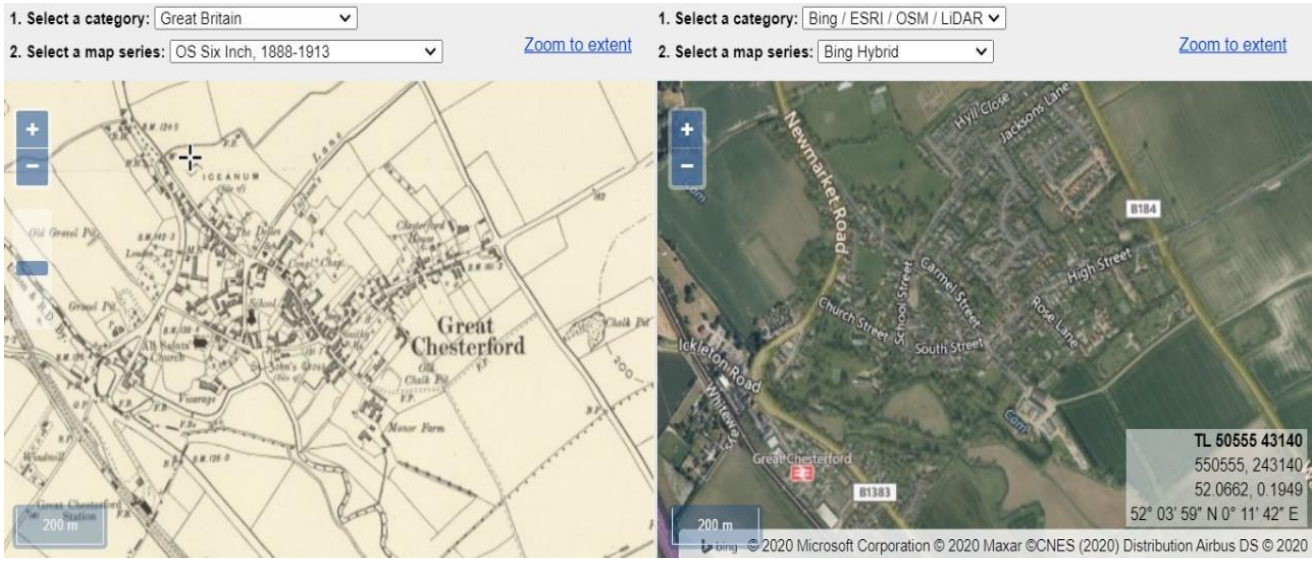

Figure 2.3 Growth of Great Chesterford showing development in a nucleated village pattern

2.20 The Roman Town/Fort/Cemeteries and Roman Temple to the north of Great Chesterford are of national importance for the historic significance of not only the sites themselves, but for the interrelationship between the sites and the surrounding landscape as attested by English Heritage, and as recognised by the Examining Inspectors in paragraphs 72–82 of their letter dated 10 January 2020 regarding the Uttlesford Regulation 19 Local Plan.

2.21 The Roman Temple was approached from the west from the Roman settlement. The approach incorporated the watercourse of the Slade (a tributary of the Cam from the east), in which ritual deposits have been discovered [Medlycott (2011) The Roman Town of Great Chesterford. EAA 137]. Sightline analysis [See Figure 2.4] shows that settlement patterns in Great Chesterford have historically preserved this open approach, which was uninterrupted by development until the mid-twentieth century.

2.22 The altar of the Roman Temple faces east and the sight lines in this direction along the river valley to the chalk ridge are of similar importance to the setting of the Scheduled Monument in the landscape.

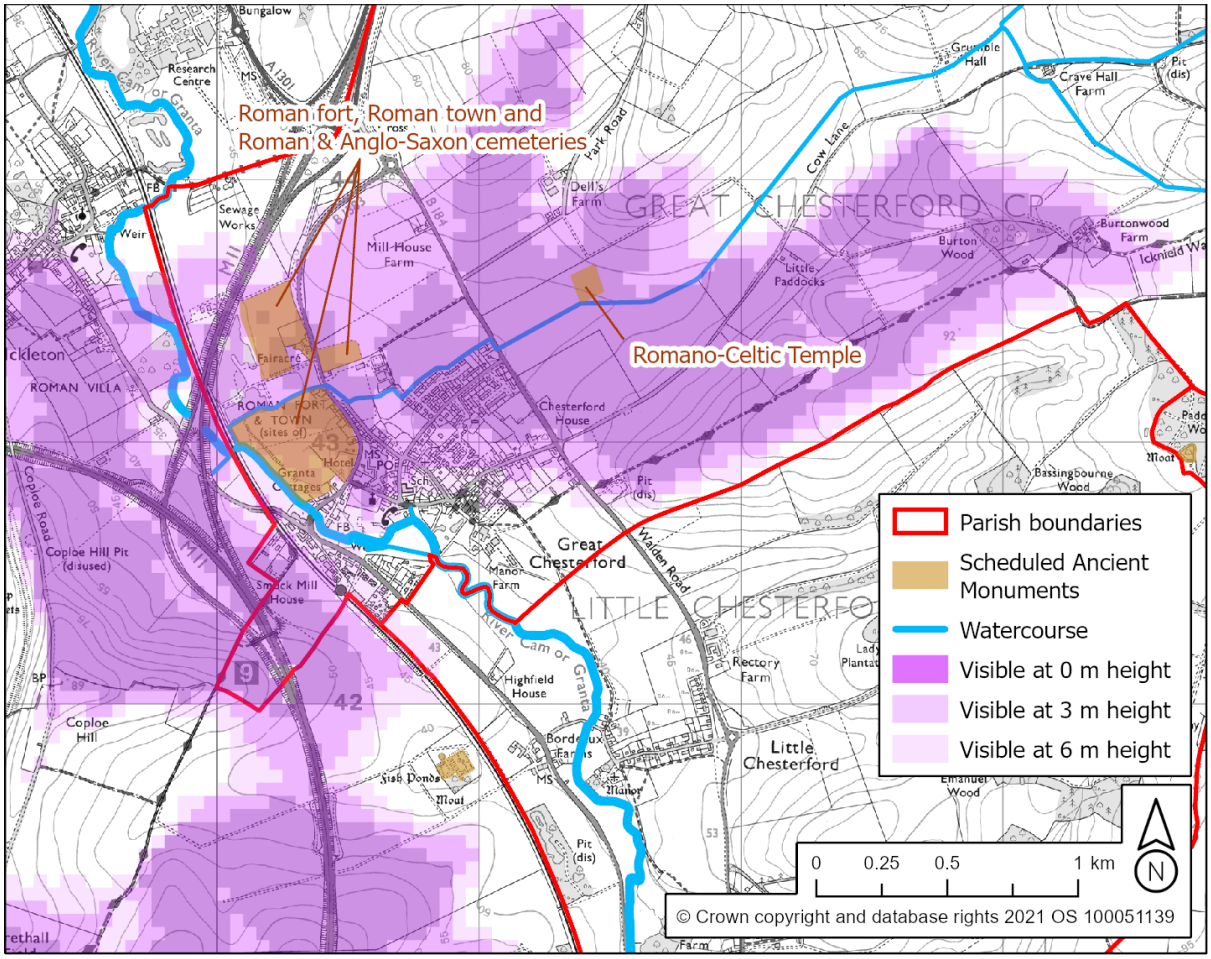

Figure 2.4 Interrelationships between the Roman Scheduled Monuments and the River Cam and tributaries, including sightline analysis from Roman temple showing areas visible at 0, 3 and 6 metres from ground level *(a single storey building will typically have an elevation between 3m and 6m).*

[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version here]

2.23 In Great Chesterford, there are 69 buildings listed as being of Special Architectural or Historical Interest, one of which is Grade I (All Saints' Church), one is Grade II* (Old Vicarage) and the remainder Grade II. In Little Chesterford, there are 14 buildings or structures Listed as being of Special Architectural and Historical Interest, of these St Mary the Virgin Church is Grade II*, The Manor is Grade I and the remainder are Grade II. Little Chesterford is of particular interest in that The Manor is an exceptional surviving example of an early thirteenth-century domestic building, and St Mary the Virgin Church also had its origins in the thirteenth century; both structures are still in use for their initial purpose.

Figure 2.5 Aerial view of The Manor and St Mary the Virgin Church, Little Chesterford

2.24 In Great Chesterford, there are 273 non-designated assets recorded on the Historic Environment Record, with 70 in Little Chesterford.

2.25 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that Local Authorities shall from time to time designate Conservation Areas which are defined as being "areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to conserve or enhance." In 2007, Uttlesford District Council completed a Conservation Area Appraisal in Great Chesterford, designating more than half of the current village extent as a Conservation Area. This included the majority of the historic medieval and post-medieval settlement in the parish, as well as the whole of Carmen Street, Carmel Street, School Street, Church Street, South Street, High Street and Manor Lane. The historic core of Little Chesterford is the village church and hall complex. This includes the Grade I Manor House and Grade II* St Mary the Virgin Church which are notable as continuing in their initial use since the early thirteenth century. This group of buildings also includes the grade II Dovecote, as well as the Grade II bridge over the River Cam. As well as the historic character of these buildings, this area is notable for its collection of mature trees and the open space beside the river.

2.26 The majority of houses (over 75%) within the Conservation Area are timber framed and plastered. Of these, around 50% are from the seventeenth/eighteenth centuries. Most have tiled roofs whilst a small proportion are thatched. A significant architectural feature of the village is the use of boundary walls, many of which are constructed of flint panels supported by brick piers and capping. The Conservation Area contains numerous trees,

mostly located in private gardens, but making a notable contribution to the overall impression of the Conservation Area. Many of these are protected by Tree Preservation Orders.

2.27 In Little Chesterford, a linear settlement pattern evolved, with the original village comprising a single row of dwellings each side of the sunken road known as The Street or High Street. Later development has included linear development along the western side of the B184 in a northerly direction; apart from this, the settlement pattern of Little Chesterford has remained unchanged for over a century. Figure 2.6 below shows a map from 1901, published in 1903, alongside an aerial map from 2020.

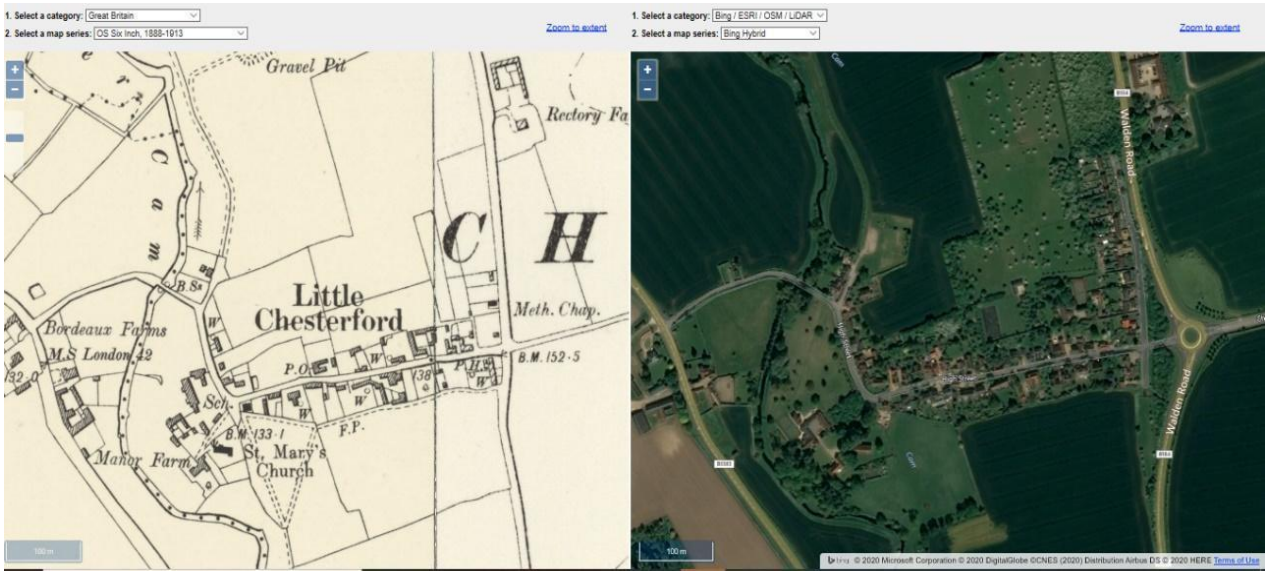

Figure 2.6 Growth of Little Chesterford showing development in a linear settlement pattern

2.28 Little Chesterford village comprises around 75 buildings ranging along the High Street and its junctions with Walden and London roads. It similarly has many examples of timber framed and plastered buildings, including some that are thatched. Eleven (11) village buildings (15%) are listed and date from the thirteenth to eighteenth centuries. Brick nineteenth-century buildings, including the Village Hall and the Reading Rooms with their decorative brickwork, are also a key feature of the village.

2.29 Springwell developed as a small cluster of dwellings on the B184. This small hamlet has had recent pressure for development of new housing, with a proposal for six new houses on the Springwell Nursery site rejected by UDC in 2013. An appeal to the Planning Inspectorate (Appeal Reference APP/C1570/A/14/2226566) was dismissed and a full explanation given that would also be relevant to any other site in Springwell. The Inspectors based their decision on two main issues (a) the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area; and (b) whether the site is in a sustainable location, with particular regard to community facilities and transport opportunities, concluding this was not a location suitable for this scale of development.

2.30 The hamlet of Springwell comprises eight clustered dwellings of which three (38%) are listed, timber framed and plastered buildings dating from the seventeenth to early

eighteenth centuries. The other key features of this hamlet are the open parkland and paddocks surrounding the nineteenth-century brick built Springwell Place and the plant nursery. Boundary features also include mature trees that form distinctive landscape features.

2.31 The adopted 2005 Uttlesford Local Plan defined Great Chesterford as a Key Rural Settlement and defined development limits (Figure 2.7). UDC has not subsequently reassessed the position of Great Chesterford within that definition.

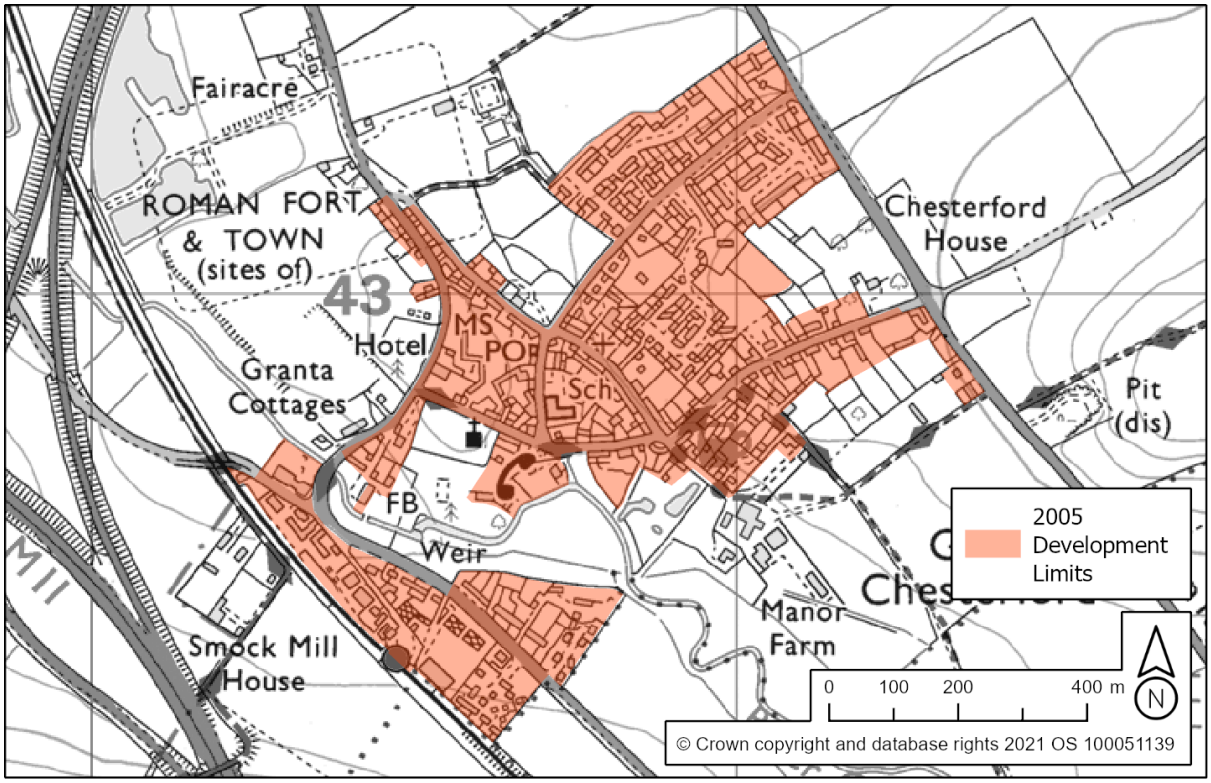

Figure 2.7 Great Chesterford 2005 Development Limits

2.32 The 2019 Regulation 19 Uttlesford Local Plan (since withdrawn) defined Great Chesterford as a Key Village and proposed to extend those development limits to include built developments adjacent to the south-east and eastern boundaries of the village (see Figure 2.8).

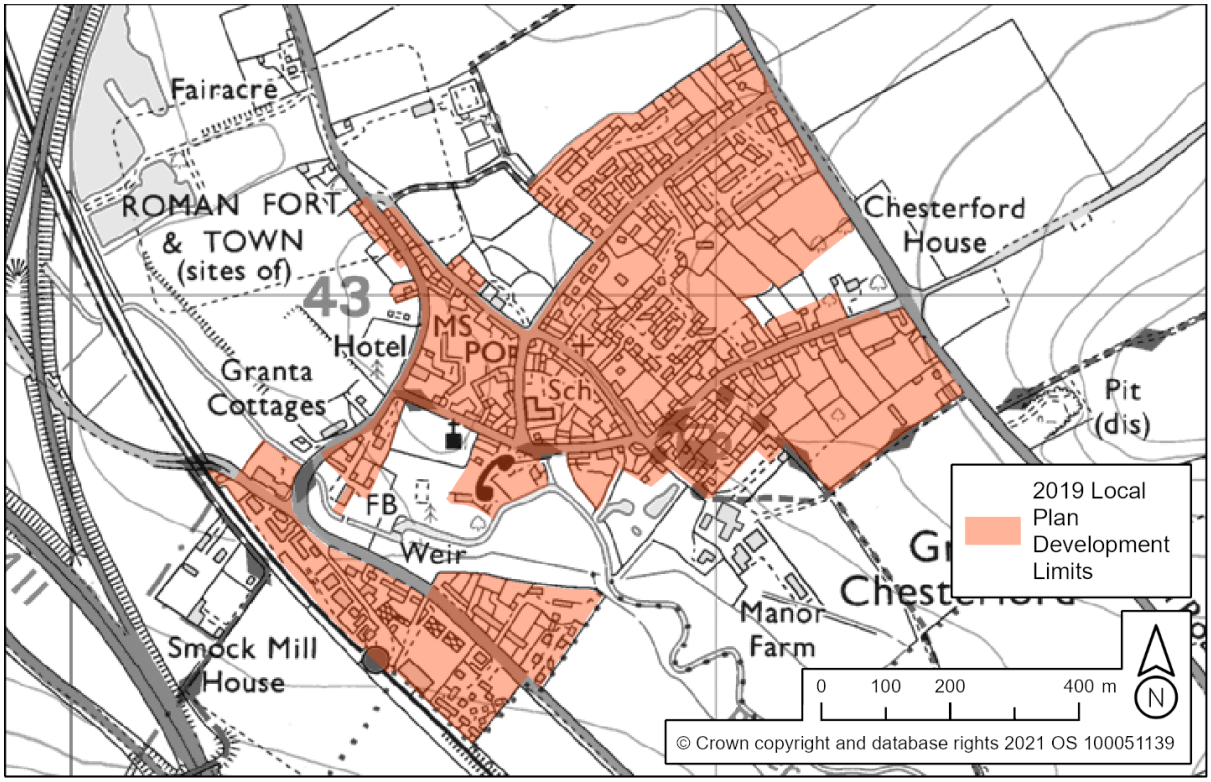

Figure 2.8 Great Chesterford Development Limits as proposed in the Regulation 19 Uttlesford Local Plan (withdrawn)

2.33 Chesterford Park to the east of the parish of Little Chesterford is characterised by open parkland that forms the setting for the nineteenth-century Manor House and a collection of late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century scientific buildings. The hilltop setting is screened by mature and ancient woodland.

Landscape

2.34 The topography of the parishes is split between the river valley, along which the villages are located, the steep slopes and plateaus which lie to the north-east through to the south-east of the villages (Chesterford Ridge) and the plateau and slopes to the south-west to west (Strethall Ridge).

2.35 In the Plan area the underlying rock is chalk, which during the Ice Ages was overlain by a glacial deposit called boulder clay – a mix of the scoured material glaciers stripped off the land as they crept forward. Here this boulder clay contains chalk, picked up as the glacier moved southwards over chalky regions to the north. As the glaciers melted at the end of the Ice Ages strong fast-flowing rivers of meltwater cut through the glacial material and down into the chalk underneath, creating valleys where sands and gravels carried by the rivers were deposited on the riverbed. Subsequent finer alluvial deposits in the river valley were laid down as the more modern slower flowing river flooded over its floodplain. This accounts for the glacial material on the plateaus, with chalky slopes and a valley floor with deposits of sands, gravels and alluvium. It also explains how the local landscape was formed predominantly by glacial meltwater.

2.36 Due to the open nature of the landscape and the dramatic changes in topography, there are important views from the villages up to Chesterford Ridge and to the opposite valley side to Strethall Ridge. From the ridges there are impressive views across the valley landscape, to which the villages contribute.

2.37 The area of the parishes to the east of the B184 is visually dominated by the chalk downs and Chesterford Ridge, whereas to the west of the B184, the landscape is more visually contained and influenced by urbanisation. The landform and drainage of the parishes are an integral part of the local landscape character and provide a unique sense of place.

2.38 The land use within the parishes is predominantly arable agriculture, with some grazing pastures adjacent to the river, to the north of Little Chesterford High Street, and to the south of The Chesterfords Community Centre in Great Chesterford. These latter fields are generally horse paddocks and are of a much smaller scale than the arable fields, which are large, open and expansive.

2.39 There are blocks of woodland throughout the parishes, some of it recorded as ancient woodland, as listed by Natural England, which is of historic importance, while other woods are more modern. Much of the woodland is on the hill-slopes or plateau which provides a sense of enclosure in the otherwise open landscape.

2.40 The River Cam (or Granta) flows south to north through the parishes. A corridor of land, between 4m and 200m wide, forms the extent of the 1 in 1,000-year flood zone of the River Cam. The parishes contain numerous other minor watercourses including streams, field drains and ponds. The river is a significant feature and has shaped the settlement pattern, transportation routes and open spaces within both villages. The Cam/Granta upper river valley has survived for millennia as an interrupted wildlife refuge and corridor. It still has little interaction with human habitations (and accompanying predatory pets) along its 40km length from its source near Widdington to Cambridge, including the 4.2km within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Figure 2.9 Aerial view of River Cam and flood zone between Little Chesterford and Great Chesterford

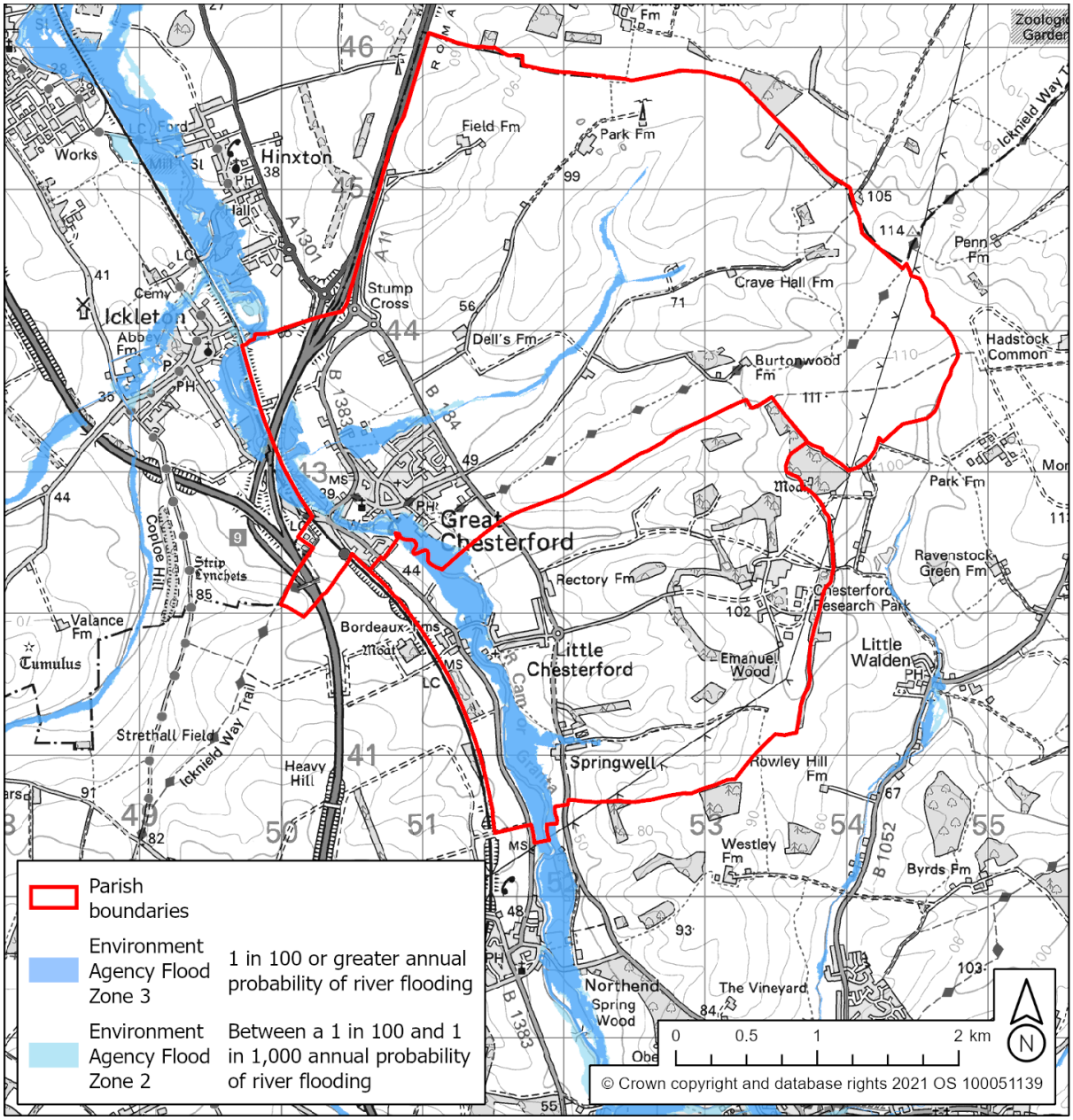

Figure 2.10 Fluvial flood zone
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version here]

2.41 Rising river levels in the River Cam, especially after prolonged periods of heavy rain, give rise to fluvial flood risk along its length, predominantly in undeveloped areas of land in the built-up area of Great Chesterford. In addition, there is a significant fluvial flood risk (affecting the Recreation Centre and playing fields) from a small tributary off the River Cam, shown in Figure 5.1. This follows a drainage route east of the River Cam from the chalk valley plateau to the north-east of Great Chesterford and across the B184, along a ditch to the north of Hyll Close and the recreation ground and continues to discharge into the River Cam near Ickleton Riverside Barns.

2.42 Similarly, there are areas of fluvial flood risk in Little Chesterford along the banks of the River Cam. However, since the river is at the western end of the village the risk to most properties is limited. A buried water conduit that carries surface water drainage runs down under the High Street from the B184 to the Manor entrance gates where it reverts to an open drain alongside the High Street and discharges into the River Cam next to the bridge. Much of the surface water from the Chesterford Research Park entrance road drains through this but it has been mitigated in the Park's development so that the flow is not excessive from this source causing flooding in the village.

2.43 Surface water (or pluvial) flood risk occurs in areas where water accumulates on the surface of land, often in a depression in the landscape, especially where the water table is near the surface close to rivers. In Great Chesterford this is a particular feature of the land north of Hyll Close and the Recreation Centre and Playing Field, and the field abutting Carmen Street. In Little Chesterford, surface water flooding can occur behind and between the houses along the High street that face the Manor field. In Springwell the land around Joseph's Farmhouse and the small field north of Old Springwell Farm are affected.

2.44 Flood zone maps are shown in Figures 2.10.

2.45 Chesterford Research Park has extensive parkland surrounding its many buildings. Despite its ridgetop location, most views into the Research Park from the villages are restricted by the surrounding woodland.

2.46 Numerous public rights of way cross the parishes allowing public access and enjoyment of the landscape. 5.5km of the Icknield Way Trail, a 110-mile historic route that runs from Suffolk to Buckinghamshire, crosses Great Chesterford Parish. This allows access for horse riders and cyclists, as well as walkers; it is often open in places and users are afforded panoramic views, as shown on Figure 2.11.

2.47 The rights of way between the villages of Great and Little Chesterford and to the south of Little Chesterford to Springwell are in alignment with the vegetated watercourses and are intimate and enclosed in character.

Photo 5 – The Cam in the Separation Zone between Great and Little Chesterford

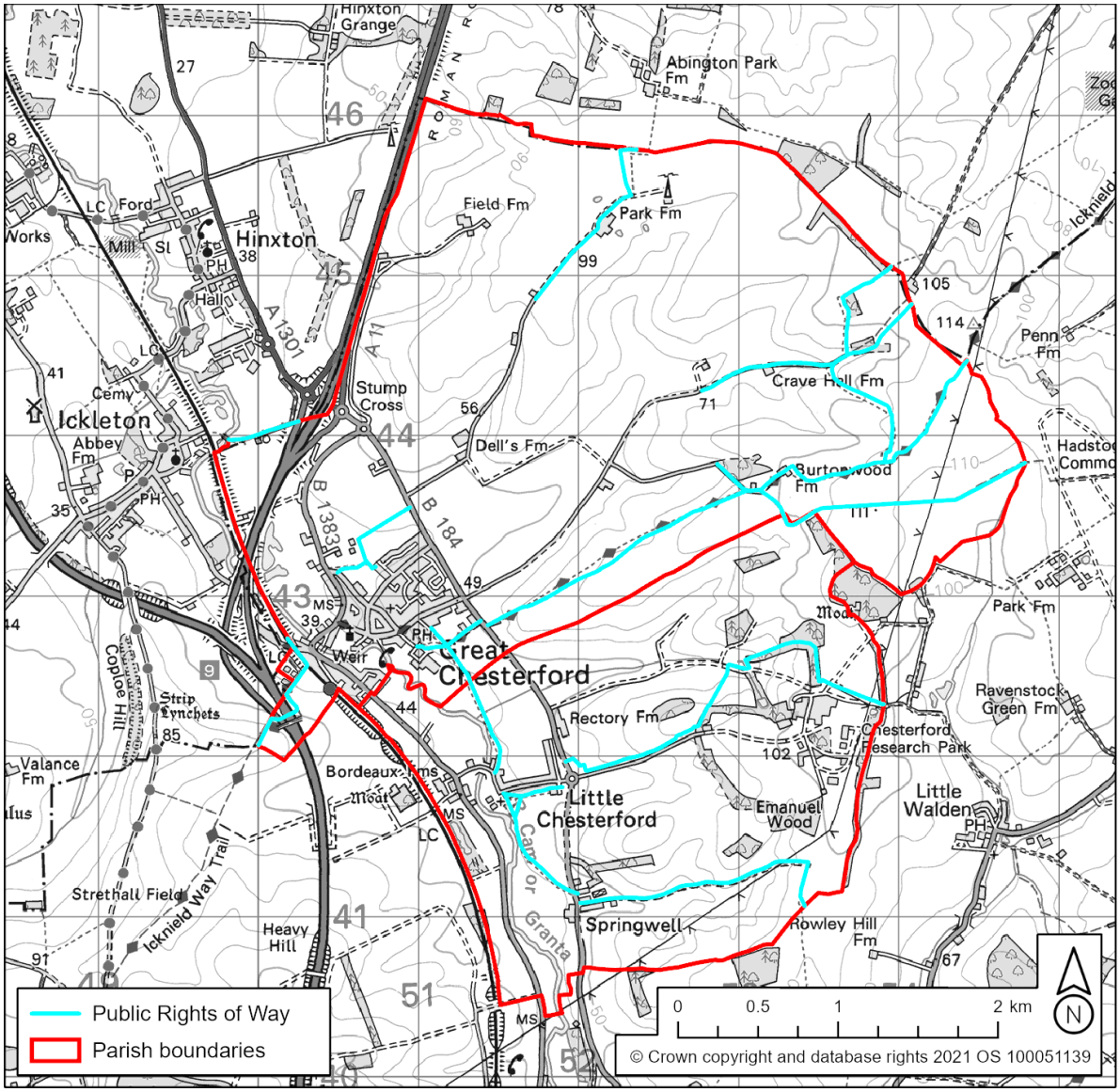

Figure 2.11 Public Rights of Way, including the Icknield Way Trail running south-west to north-east
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version here]

Wildlife

2.48 There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within the plan area, but Great and Little Chesterford contain both Local Wildlife Sites and Ancient Woodland.

2.49 Local Wildlife Sites are areas of land that are especially important for their wildlife. They are identified and selected locally using robust, scientifically-determined criteria and detailed ecological surveys.

2.50 Most of the soil in the region is base-rich (alkaline) due to the calcareous nature of the local chalk geology from which it derives. This alkaline soil has a characteristic flora and associated fauna with acid-loving species unable to flourish, akin to that of other chalk areas nationally such as the South Downs. Thus, chalky woods, grasslands or marshes have characteristic plants and associated animal life. This, coupled perhaps with climatic

constraints, has resulted in a number of nationally scarce species being quite widespread in North Essex.

2.51 There are five Local Wildlife Sites within the Plan area as identified in Uttlesford District Council Local Wildlife Site Review 2007, shown in Table 2.1 below:

Table 2.1

Site	Reason for designation
Ufd71 A11 Chesterford Special Roadside Verge	This section of road verge supports Perennial Flax (*Linum perenne*).
Ufd74 Great Chesterford Road Verge	This site comprises the northernmost section of Essex County Council Protected Road Verge UTT24a. It retains a chalk grassland flora that includes Greater Knapweed (*Centaurea scabiosa*), Wild Basil (*Clinopodium vulgare*), Field Scabious (*Knautia arvensis*), Burnet-Saxifrage (*Pimpinella saxifrage*), Bladder Campion (*Silene vulgaris*) and Hoary Plantain (*Plantago media*). The flora also includes Common Star-of-Bethlehem (*Ornithogalum angustifolium*).
Ufd82 Little Chesterford Verges	These three sections of road verge comprise part of an Essex County Council protected Roadside Verge UTT24b. They support an important chalk grassland flora, which includes Wild Liquorice (*Astragalus glycyphyllos*), Small Scabious (*Scabiosa columbaria*), Greater Knapweed (*Centaurea scabiosa*), Wild Basil (*Clinopodium vulgare*), Lady's Bedstraw (*Galium verum*), Restharrow (*Ononis repens*), Common Broomrape (*Orobanche minor*) and Hoary Plantain (*Plantago media*). The northernmost section supports a large population of the Essex Red Data Listed Hawkweed Oxtongue (*Picris hieracioides*), along with a few plants of Wild Liquorice, and frequent Red Bartsia (*Odontites vernus*).
Ufd103 Burton Wood	This small ancient wood has a neglected coppice with standards.
Ufd104 Crave Hall Meadow	This small field is one of very few grasslands remaining in the extreme north of the district.

Photo 6 – The Cam

Photo 7 – A Kingfisher on the Cam

2.52 In addition, the Uttlesford District Council Local Wildlife Site Review 2007 identified two potential wildlife sites, shown in Table 2.2 below:

Table 2.2

PloWS 1 Great Chesterford Churchyard	The flora of this yard includes one or two species associated with unimproved, base-rich soils, but it is very intensively mown at present.
PloWS 4 Bordeaux Pit	This old mineral working site is actively managed by Saffron Walden Angling club. The presence of fish stock may preclude the presence of Great Crested Newts, but it does favour Kingfisher, which have apparently been seen on a regular basis by fishermen. Perhaps the area of greatest interest is a small strip of sparsely vegetated ground along the north-eastern boundary, where an abundance of Blue Fleabane (*Erigeron acris*) is notable. This area may have a significant invertebrate fauna. The common glow worm (*Lampyris noctiluca*), found mainly on chalky grasslands is found here.

2.53 Ancient Woodland is designated by Natural England, the government's adviser for the natural environment in England, which helps to protect England's nature and landscapes for people to enjoy. There are three Ancient Woodland sites within the Plan area:

- Emanuel Wood (south of Chesterford Research Park)
- Paddock Wood (Little Chesterford Parish)
- Burton Wood (Great Chesterford Parish)

2.54 In addition, there are a number of important woodland sites, all located within the Chesterford Research Park environs. These include: The Elms, Barn Hill, Bassingbourne Wood, Fishpond Plantation, Lady Plantation and Four Acre Wood.

2.55 A variety of fauna is also found in both parishes, including but not limited to corn bunting, lapwing, grey partridge, snipe, stone curlew, tree sparrow, turtle dove, yellow wagtail, heron, badgers, bats and deer. The Four-spotted moth *Tyta luctuosa* is found on the chalk uplands of the Plan area. This species only occurs very locally in southern Britain, and is

identified as a species of principle importance for biodiversity conservation. The Liquorice Piercer Moth *(Grapholita pallifrontana)* is found in the Little Chesterford Special Roadside verge, one of only three known sites in Essex. A project to study its lifecycle commenced in April 2021 to aid conservation of this rare and declining species (a UK BAP Priority Species). Golden Plover in flocks of over 100 are visible over-wintering on the fields to the south of Cow Lane and also on the fields next to the permissive footpath from Grumble Hall to Park Farm. In 2020, there was successful breeding of lapwings on the field abutting Cow Lane. Purple Emperor butterflies, Jersey Tiger Moths and Silver-washed Fritillary are found within the parish. There are five owl species in the parish including long-eared, short-eared, tawny, little and barn, and every summer the hobby can be seen in the Parish.

Infrastructure, Amenities and Education

2.56 Great Chesterford has its own railway station (opened to passengers in 1848) serving Cambridge and London Liverpool Street. Junction 9 of the M11, which connects London with the North, lies less than half a mile north of Great Chesterford. The local bus service connects both villages to Saffron Walden to the south and Cambridge to the north.

2.57 The western boundary of the parishes is, for the majority of its length, defined by the Cambridge to London mainline railway. Land in the Neighbourhood Plan area to the west of the railway line is separated by it from the settlements and their services. The only access to this area is via the unmanned railway crossing and tunnel. These routes are unsafe for pedestrian use.

2.58 In Great Chesterford, there are two public houses, two medical surgeries, a hotel, a shop, a thirteenth-century Anglican church (All Saints) and a Congregational Chapel. The Chesterfords Community Centre is well used by a wide range of community, musical and sporting groups, and is situated adjacent to the recreation ground comprising football and cricket pitches, tennis courts, walking trail, outdoor gym, children's play area, skate park and the bowls club. Allotments and a village orchard have also been recently provided on a site close to the recreation ground.

2.59 Little Chesterford is home to a thirteenth-century Anglican church (St Mary the Virgin) and a village hall (formerly the site of the village school 1862–1902).

2.60 Education is provided by The Chesterfords Community Preschool for children aged 2–5 years, and Great Chesterford Primary Academy for children aged 4–11 years. There has been a school in Great Chesterford since 1514.

Photo 8 – Great Chesterford Primary Academy

Employment

2.61 There are seven main employment sites within Great and Little Chesterford: Station Approach, Plextek single occupier site, Park Farm (which comprises two separate sites), and Cam Valley Crematorium are in Great Chesterford; Rectory Farm Barns, Chesterford Research Park and Springwell Nursery and Garden Centre are in Little Chesterford. Employment sites are shown on Figures 5.23 and 5.24.

2.62 Plextek specialises in technology, electronic design and product design for defence, security, healthcare and Internet of Things. The company employs approximately 150 people.

2.63 Station Approach and Rectory Farm Barns comprise a range of businesses.

2.64 Chesterford Research Park comprises biotechnology, pharmaceutical and technology research and development companies of all sizes. Approximately 700 employees work at the park.

2.65 Springwell Nursery and Garden Centre is a family-run business offering a range of plants, shrubs and garden equipment.

2.66 Whilst the most common land use in Great and Little Chesterford is agricultural, modern farming practices limit employment opportunities.

Population

2.67 In the first National Census of 1801, Great Chesterford had a population of 600 and Little Chesterford had a population of 120. By 1841, the population of Great Chesterford had grown to 917, while Little Chesterford's population peaked at 276 inhabitants in 1861.

2.68 The population spread from the 2011 census is shown in Table 2.3 below:

Table 2.3

Age	**Great Chesterford**		**Little Chesterford**	
	No.	%	No.	%
0-17	369	24.7	55	25.6
18-29	134	9	18	8.4
30-44	290	19.4	35	16.3
45-59	355	23.8	56	26
60+	346	23.1	51	23.7
TOTAL	1494		215	

Housing

2.69 The tenure of dwellings for Great and Little Chesterford in 2011 are shown in Table 2.4 below:

Table 2.4

Tenure	Great Chesterford		Little Chesterford	
	No.	%	No.	%
Owned outright	222	37	27	33.7
Owned with a mortgage or loan	242	40.4	33	41.2
Shared ownership	3	0.5	0	0
Social rented	52	8.7	8	10
Privately rented	67	11.2	11	13.8
Living rent free	13	2.2	1	1.3
TOTAL	599		80	

2.70 Property prices in Uttlesford are higher than figures for the overall Region (the East) due to the district's proximity to London and Cambridge. For example, the average price of a new build house is £400,773 for the Region compared to £521,449 for Uttlesford (Uttlesford Housing Market Data Report Oct 2020).

Growth

2.71 In the second half of the twentieth century, growth in Great Chesterford has taken place mainly on the north-eastern side of the village, with industrial development in the west along London Road. There has also been some piecemeal development to the south and west.

2.72 In the first decade of the twenty-first century, it was noted by both the district councillor for Great Chesterford and the chair of Great Chesterford Parish Council that the village was not making a positive contribution to the development of new homes within the district. A more pro-active approach led to suitable sites being identified and the development of new homes in larger numbers from 2014, as set out in Table 2.6. Subsequent new developments have been built both to the east and west of the village.

2.73 The size of Little Chesterford has changed relatively little from the early part of the nineteenth century. Later buildings infill the gaps left by the 'Great Fire' of 1914. Housing built by the local authority to the north of Walden Road in the early 1960s is the only extension to the settlement since this time. These 16 dwellings with their large front and rear gardens form the single homogenous group within the village.

2.74 The growth of the population in the Plan area from 2001 and 2011 census data can be seen in Table 2.5 below:

Table 2.5

	Population	Dwellings
2001	1629	704
2011	1709	714
% Change	+ 4.9%	+ 1.42%

2.75 The numbers of new dwellings delivered since 2011 are set out in Table 2.6 below:

Table 2.6

	Great C'ford new	Great C'ford total	Great C'ford % change	Little C'ford new	Little C'ford total	Little C'ford % change	Great and Little C'ford new	Great and Little C'ford % increase
2011–2012	1	628	0.16%	0	87	0.00%	1	0.14%
2012–2013	0	628	0.16%	1	88	1.15%	1	0.28%
2013–2014	1	629	0.32%	1	89	2.30%	2	0.56%
2014–2015	42	671	7.02%	0	89	2.30%	42	6.44%
2015–2016	15	686	9.41%	3	92	5.75%	18	8.96%
2016–2017	7	693	10.53%	0	92	5.75%	7	9.94%
2017–2018	12	705	12.44%	2	94	8.05%	14	11.90%
2018–2019	78	783	24.88%	0	94	8.05%	78	22.83%
TOTAL	156			7			163	

2.76 The housing growth in Great Chesterford has been significant and has largely been the result of new housing sites at:

- Land south of Stanley Road and Four Acres – 50 dwellings
- Land at Thorpe Lea – 30 dwellings
- Land at New World Timber Frame and Graveldene Nurseries – 42 dwellings

2.77 Additional housing in Little Chesterford has been the result of infill and redevelopment of existing plots.

Chapter 3 – Key Issues

The Existing Planning Context

3.1 There is considerable strength of feeling in both villages that new housing developments may potentially harm the distinct character and identity of each village. Residents wish to see new housing developments managed in such a way that they are organic and proportionate, with their archaeological, historic and attractive settings being protected.

3.2 A large proportion of (although not all) residents of both Great and Little Chesterford strongly opposed the inclusion of North Uttlesford Garden Community in the previous (now withdrawn) Local Plan, galvanising volunteers and raising funds in order to enable representatives from both Parish Councils to make an effective case in opposition to the plan at examination stage 2019–2020. Upon examination, the NUGC was described as "flawed" in landscape and heritage terms by the Planning Inspectorate.

3.3 There is significant local development pressure as a result of the UDC substantial shortfall of new dwellings. The Local Plan process has been restarted but the timetable has already slipped. It is anticipated that once again UDC will be looking for more small and medium-sized sites for housing development.

3.4 In addition to the development pressure within the district, there is considerable development immediately to the north in the district of South Cambridgeshire. Consented developments include 1,500 dwellings at the Wellcome Genome Trust in Hinxton, new employment sites at Iconix Park, and the old Spicers Site in Sawston. There is also a proposal for an AgriTech technology park in Hinxton (although the developer appeal to the Secretary of State has now been dismissed). All of these developments will place increased pressure on existing inadequate transport infrastructure.

3.5 Consented development at The Wellcome Genome Trust Campus at Hinxton (South Cambridgeshire District Planning reference S/4329/18) extends the settlement boundary southward as far as the northern boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area, diminishing the open landscape that forms the northern gateway to the villages.

3.6 There is pressure for development that would erode settlement patterns by extending the boundaries of built villages along the B184 and B1383 in both directions, including ongoing planning applications and land put forward in the Call For Sites.

Issues Raised by Residents

Findings from The Great Chesterford Village Plan 2015 and the Little Chesterford Village Survey 2016.

Housing

3.7 The Great Chesterford Village Plan 2015 and the Little Chesterford Village Survey 2016 identified a wide range of priorities and concerns. These included topics such as housing, traffic, sustainable transport and appropriate facilities for residents of all ages. The issues that cannot be appropriately addressed by a Neighbourhood Plan are detailed in

Chapter 6, and the respective Parish Councils will continue to review these in their planning for the villages.

3.8 Residents accepted that new housing would need to be built within the villages, but that the growth should be managed. Little Chesterford supported an additional 10 dwellings, while Great Chesterford accepted up to an additional 100 dwellings.

3.9 In both cases, it was clear that residents wished to manage growth while retaining the distinctive and rural nature of the villages, protecting surrounding fields and green spaces, as well as the open views. In Little Chesterford there was a particular desire to protect the historic core of the village – the church, the meadow and the hall.

3.10 Residents of Little Chesterford also expressed a desire to see proportional growth comprising a mix of housing on sites that maintained the settlement pattern of the village.

3.11 Great Chesterford expressed a strong desire for affordable housing for local people, especially 1–2-bedroom or 3–4-bedroom homes. However, it should be noted that the Icknield Rise development included 40% affordable homes with local connection as a priority for allocation in perpetuity, but on completion in 2019 the homes could not be filled with applicants from within the parishes.

Transport

3.12 Speeding was identified as a key concern in both villages and there was widespread support for traffic calming measures. In Great Chesterford concerns were raised about speeding on both the B183 and B184, as well as through the centre of the village. In Little Chesterford, concerns were raised about the village being used as a 'rat run' for traffic accessing Chesterford Research Park.

3.13 There was a clear desire from residents to improve the provision of sustainable transport opportunities, by improving the existing and planned cycleways and new cycleways between the villages.

3.14 Residents also identified the importance of footpaths, with regular maintenance and clear signage.

Facilities

3.15 The Great Chesterford Village Plan highlighted a desire for improved provision of facilities for the under 19s, including sport, activities and a youth club.

3.16 Little Chesterford residents were also keen that the needs of an ageing population be met.

Early Years Provision

3.17 The Great Chesterford Village Plan highlighted the desire of residents to improve Early Years provision within the village. 80.1% of respondents wished to see a permanent site for the existing preschool and 83.6% wished to see an increase in the number of sessions it offered (five mornings at the time).

3.18 In 2016 there was an s106 settlement between Uttlesford District Council and a local land owner in which land was transferred to Great Chesterford Parish Council with a covenant

that stated the land should have educational use. Since then, the Parish Council has been progressing plans to provide a permanent Early Years facility on the site.

Issues Raised by Independent Assessments

Landscape Character Assessment

3.19 A Landscape Character Assessment was completed in February 2017 by Hankinson Duckett Associates, commissioned to inform the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan. The assessment determines the parishes' local landscape character, identifying key characteristics and sensitivities both in terms of character and visibility. The report also seeks to set out landscape capacity and development guidelines, should development sites come forward in the future. A number of key issues were identified and these are outlined below.

3.20 There are a considerable number of historic assets, both within the villages as part of their built form and presence in the surrounding landscape, as exemplified by the two Scheduled Monuments. The built heritage is reflected in the local vernacular and the materials used in construction including brick, thatch and pargetting.

3.21 Due to the open nature of the landscape and the dramatic changes in topography, there are important views from the villages up to Chesterford Ridge and to the opposite valley side to Strethall Ridge. From the ridges, there are impressive views across the valley landscape, to which the villages contribute.

3.22 The report assessed 13 parish character areas and awarded sensitivity and value ratings ranging from major, substantial, moderate to slight. Areas judged to have major or substantial sensitivity or value indicate that development would have a significant detrimental effect on the character of the landscape.

3.23 Of the 13 parish character areas assessed, one has major sensitivity, seven have substantial sensitivity, four have moderate sensitivity, and there is one character area with slight sensitivity (see Figure 3.1).

3.24 The landscape value of the parishes is also mixed, with one area being assessed as having substantial landscape value, nine areas having moderate landscape value and three areas having slight landscape value.

3.25 No parish character areas were assessed as having high/very high landscape capacity for development. One parish character area (character area 14) has been assessed as having high capacity – this area has now been developed as Thorpe Lea. Another area has medium/high capacity and two areas have medium capacity. These areas may have limited capacity for residential development without significant harm to the local landscape character.

3.26 One parish character area has a negligible/low capacity for development, seven have a low capacity and one has low/medium capacity. The area with negligible/low landscape capacity is Area 1, the open plateau of the Chesterford Ridge, which is visually exposed with wide ranging views and too remote from existing settlements to be suitable for development. Development within this Character Area should be avoided as it would be out of character with the openness of the landscape in Area 1.

3.27 Area 7 coincides with the village core of Little Chesterford which has extremely limited space for any infill development and it has well defined settlement edges.

3.28 Developable land in the Great Chesterford village core is again extremely restricted. There are three grazing fields to the north of Carmen Street and Jacksons Lane. These fields bring a rural influence to the village core and make an important contribution to its landscape character, thus potential development on these fields should be resisted.

3.29 A large proportion of the landscape of the Great and Little Chesterford parishes has substantial landscape sensitivity and moderate landscape value, which is consistent with the contrasting landscape of open chalk uplands and the more intimate Cam Valley. It follows, therefore, that in a landscape of such contrasts there will be throughout the parishes large areas that have negligible/low to low/medium landscape capacity for future development.

3.30 Should any of the internal spaces within the villages come forward for development, due consideration should be given to the effect that development would have on the overall character of the villages. The majority of open spaces within the village of Great Chesterford lie within the Conservation Area, which is protected through national and local planning policy. Any proposed development would need to conserve or enhance the special character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The river, public and private incidental open spaces and feature walls are an intrinsic part of the special character of the Conservation Area. As a result, the primary open spaces and routes are particularly sensitive to new development and should be preserved. This similarly applies to the open spaces and routes to be found in and surrounding the historic core of Little Chesterford.

3.31 Any new development within the villages should consider their relationship to the open spaces, the river and routes within the villages; should maintain the green and leafy character of the village; and should respect the context of their location within the villages. Consideration should also be given to the scale, form and massing of built development, along with the materials to be used.

3.32 Development proposed within the villages but outside the Great Chesterford Conservation Area would still need to consider the setting to the Conservation Area in Great Chesterford and the historic core in Little Chesterford, and the contribution that the proposals could make to the overall character of the villages.

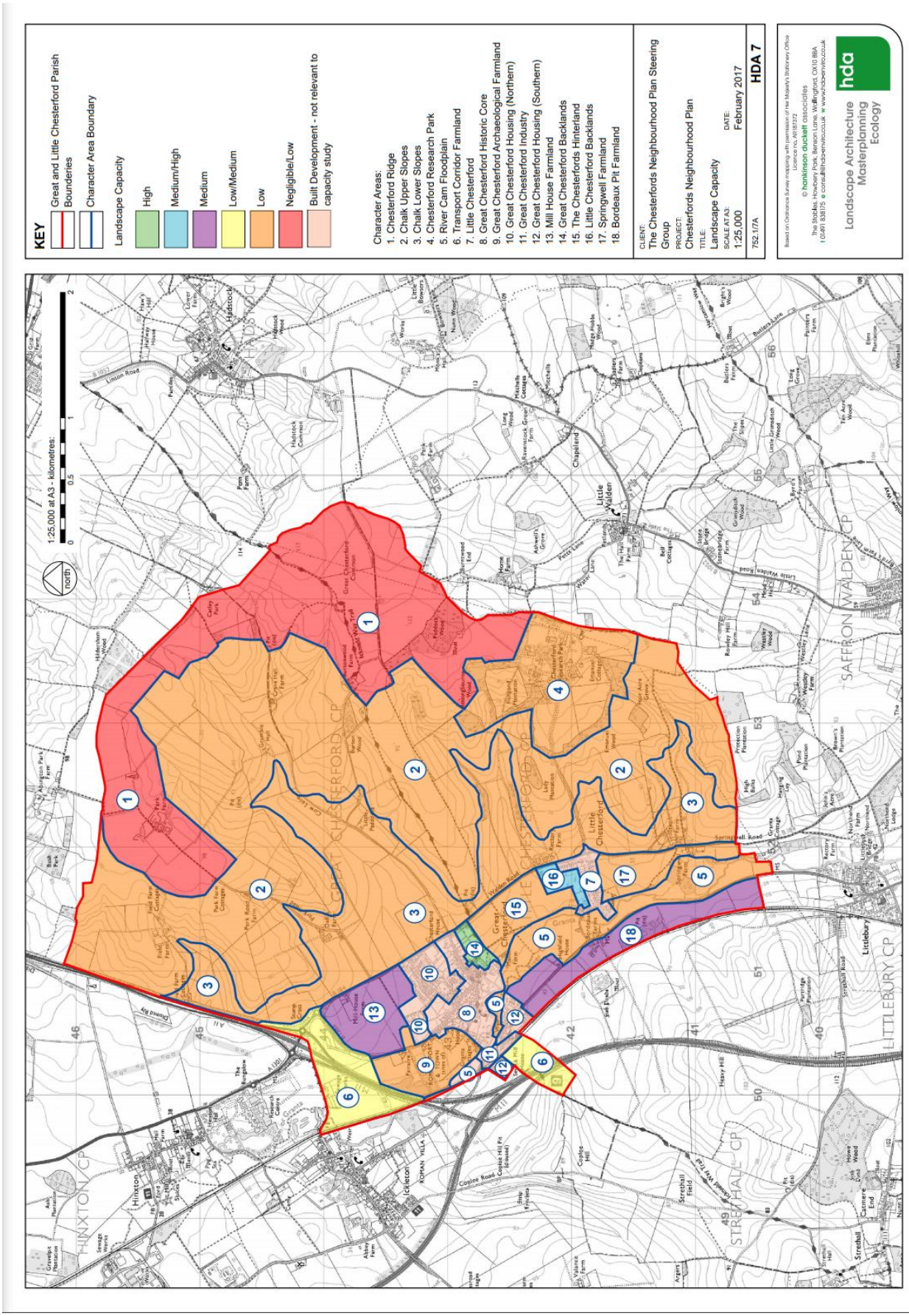

Figure 3.1 Landscape Capacity Map

Historic Environment Assessment

3.33 In July 2016, Essex County Council completed an Historic Environment Assessment, commissioned to inform the preparation of the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan. The report presents an overview of the historic environment within the parishes of Great and Little Chesterford and identifies the significance of the major heritage assets located within them, including the contribution to their significance made by their setting.

3.34 The Roman fort and town and Roman and Anglo-Saxon cemeteries of Great Chesterford are of national importance archaeologically and historically. There has been extensive archaeological study of the Great Chesterford Roman Town Scheduled site since its discovery in 1719, including numerous excavations, aerial photography and a geophysical survey. The finds from the excavations are on display at the British Museum, the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology and Saffron Walden Museum.

3.35 In addition, the Scheduled Romano-Celtic temple, which is intimately linked to the history and development of the town, is located 1km to the east of the town on the site of the preceding Late Iron Age shrine.

3.36 The Romano-Celtic temple site is of national importance archaeologically and historically. The substantial temple complex is located within an arable field on the broad sloping hillside on the east side of the River Cam, 1km to the east of the Scheduled Roman town. Excavations took place in 1847 and 1978 – the finds from these excavations are on display at the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology and Saffron Walden Museum.

3.37 Romano-Celtic temples were built and used throughout the Roman period from the mid-first century AD to the late fourth/early fifth century AD. Around 150 sites have been recorded in England. In view of their rarity and their importance in contributing to the complete picture of Roman religious practice, including its continuity from Iron Age practice, all Romano-Celtic temples with surviving archaeological potential are considered to be of national importance.

3.38 The temple has wide views in all directions, of which the most significant are those looking east (the direction in which Romano-British temples faced) and those looking west towards the Roman town, and it is imperative that these views are conserved.

3.39 The Great Chesterford Conservation Area comprises the majority of the historic village and slightly more than half of the entire modern village extent. It covers the majority of the historic medieval and post-medieval settlement in the parish, including the whole of Carmen Street, Carmel Street, School Street, Church Street, South Street, High Street and Manor Lane. This contains listed buildings, the majority of which are timber framed and plastered, with 50% dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Conservation Area forms the heart of the community, including many of the homes of the village inhabitants, as well as the majority of the public buildings and public open spaces.

3.40 The historic core of Little Chesterford is the village church and hall complex. This includes the Grade I Manor House and Grade II* St Mary the Virgin Church, which are notable as continuing in their initial use since the early thirteenth century. This group of buildings also includes the grade II Dovecote, as well as the Grade II bridge over the River Cam. As well as the historic character of these buildings, this area is notable for its collection of mature trees and the open space beside the river. Little Chesterford village comprises around 75

buildings ranging along the High Street and its junctions with Walden and London roads. It similarly has many examples of timber framed and plastered buildings, including some that are thatched. Of these, 10 (13%) are listed buildings dating from the thirteenth to eighteenth centuries. Brick nineteenth-century buildings, including the Village Hall and the Reading Rooms with their decorative brickwork, are also a key feature of the village.

3.41 A significant architectural feature of Great Chesterford village is the use of boundary walls, many of which are constructed of flint panels supported by brick piers and capping. The Conservation Area has numerous trees, mostly located in private gardens, but making a notable contribution to the overall impression of the Conservation Area. Many of these are protected by Tree Preservation Orders. In Little Chesterford the banks of the eastern end of the sunken lane that is the High Street are a distinctive feature, and the brick and flint walls found in Great Chesterford also form many boundaries in Little Chesterford and Springwell.

3.42 In addition, residents of Little Chesterford completed a series of village walks in 2016 in which they identified similar features that they wished to conserve, including flint walls and the banks of the sunken lane that forms the eastern part of the High Street.

3.43 The Great Chesterford Conservation Area is visually cohesive as the bulk of a historic nucleated settlement. Its range of listed timber framed and plastered buildings dating from the sixteenth century in the historic core of the village make a particularly important contribution to the environment.

3.44 The report identifies a number of significant and important views within the Conservation Area, including those from Horse River Green over the River Cam into the open countryside beyond, views of the church tower, the view looking over the paddock with park-like characteristics from Jacksons Lane, and the view from Carmen Street looking west across the gently undulating paddock.

3.45 The Parish Church of All Saints forms the central focal point of a group of listed buildings away from the village centre; it is the only grade I listing in the village. The church is located on the south-west side of the medieval town, and it is presumed that there was an early medieval or late Saxon church on the site before the present church was built. The churchyard occupies part of the site of what appears to have been a second Roman walled enclosure located to the south of the Roman walled town. The church has played a significant spiritual and social role in the history of Great Chesterford certainly since the thirteenth century, and probably since the late Saxon period. There also appears to have been a pre-Christian religious dimension to the site.

3.46 The Manor in Little Chesterford is listed for its architectural and historic value as grade I. It is a rare example of an early domestic building, originally built as an early thirteenth-century manor house (c.1200), which was partly rebuilt and altered in the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, dating from the thirteenth century, is located to the east of The Manor and is listed as Grade II*. The church and hall complex in Little Chesterford is of particular interest in that The Manor is an exceptional surviving example of an early thirteenth-century domestic building, and the church also had its origins in the thirteenth century; both structures are still in use for their initial purpose. The complex has played a significant spiritual and social role in the history of Little Chesterford.

3.47 The Moated Site, Fishpond and Enclosure at Bordeaux Farms, Littlebury is a site 600m west of Little Chesterford Church. The Bordeaux Farm moated site is of national importance archaeologically and historically and is designated as a Scheduled Monument. Whilst falling outside of the Plan area, its close proximity warrants inclusion as any development associated with the eastern side of Little Chesterford has the potential to impact upon the setting of the Scheduled area. Around 6,000 moated sites are known in England, with over 900 recorded in Essex. They consist of wide ditches, often or seasonally water-filled, partly or completely enclosing one or more islands of dry ground on which stood domestic or religious buildings. The majority of moated sites served as prestigious aristocratic and seigneurial residences with the provision of a moat intended as a status symbol rather than a practical military defence. The peak period during which moated sites were built was between 1250 and 1350, and by far the greatest concentration lies in central and eastern parts of England. They form a significant class of medieval monument and are important for the understanding of the distribution of wealth and status in the countryside.

3.48 The Moated Site in Paddock Wood is a site 560m north-east of Chesterford Research Park. It is of national importance archaeologically and historically and is designated as a Scheduled Monument. Whilst falling outside of the Plan area, its close proximity warrants inclusion as any development associated with the western side of Little Chesterford Parish has the potential to impact upon the setting of the Scheduled area. As a moated site, its significance mirrors that of the moated site at Bordeaux Farms.

3.49 The recommendations of the Historic Environment Assessment were:

1. *Preserve the intervisibility between the Scheduled Monuments comprising Roman town and temple, as the visible link between these two monuments is a major component in the understanding of the inter-dependence of the monuments and forms an integral part of the setting of the two monuments.*
2. *Retain the open aspect of the Roman-Celtic temple area to ensure that the setting of the monument is preserved.*
3. *Restrict development along Newmarket Road, as there are significant views from there into the Roman town which should not be blocked.*
4. *Resist any further erosion of the distinct open space between the two historic village settlements to ensure that they retain their distinct identities.*
5. *Follow the recommendations of the Great Chesterford Conservation Area Appraisal in the future management of the area or its setting.*
6. *Retain the open spaces identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal and avoid development in these areas (Horse River Green, the churchyard, the grounds of Bishop's House, the school field in the centre of the town and the paddocks to the east of Carmen Street).*
7. *Preserve the open space in Little Chesterford around the church and hall, and the views along the river from the historic bridge southwards towards The Manor and northwards to Great Chesterford, by preventing development.*
8. *Any future infill development in Little Chesterford should respect the nature of the present historic buildings and should be designed to reflect the historic architecture and layout, both in terms of design as well as boundary treatment.*

9. *Preserve the setting of the Bordeaux Farm Scheduled site by avoiding any development that does not relate directly to the agricultural role of the farm.*
10. *Promote the historic environment of the Chesterfords to the occupants of the villages as well as to visitors.*

Photo 9 – Brick and flint wall at Carmen Street

Chapter 4 – Vision and Objectives

The Vision

4.1 The vision for the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan is:

By 2033, Great and Little Chesterford will have each grown organically and proportionally and continue to be attractive places to live for those seeking a sense of community and place, retaining their separate and distinctive characteristics and identities.

The Chesterfords will continue to support change through sustainable development (in accordance with paragraph 8 of NPPF) that retains our heritage, shared resources, rural feel and inclusive, welcoming community.

Objectives

4.2 The objective of the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan is:

To contribute to the achievement of sustainable development by ensuring that Great and Little Chesterford continue to grow at an organic and sustainable rate, supporting viable and diverse communities and protecting meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

This will be achieved by:

(A) retaining and protecting the individuality and distinctive characteristics of the three main settlements (villages of Great Chesterford, Little Chesterford and the hamlet of Springwell) within the rural setting of the River Cam Valley, including their distinct settlement patterns;

(B) promoting safe and sustainable transport by promoting pedestrian use of railway station, safe pedestrian and cycle access to village services and between villages, road safety for all in village streets and promoting and enhancing cycling routes south to Saffron Walden and north towards Cambridge;

(C) conserving and enhancing important landscape characteristics and views;

(D) conserving and enhancing the historic environment features of the Neighbourhood Plan area;

(E) maintaining and enhancing community spaces that are valued for recreation, education and/or services (including designated Local Green Spaces) which make a significant positive contribution to the well-being and quality of life of residents and the aesthetic quality of the Plan area;

(F) protecting and enhancing local green spaces of value to the local communities;

(G) promoting sustainable economic development and local business within the Neighbourhood Plan Area, the protection and improvement of jobs and employment areas for employment use, providing employment to both local people and those who commute into the area, whilst protecting and enhancing the rural and village environments and sustainable travel;

(H) the protection and improvement of existing housing stock for residents and identifying land for proportionate growth of residential properties.

The Process for Establishing the Vision and Objectives

4.3 At the Annual Village Meeting on 12 July 2018, residents were asked to volunteer for a new Neighbourhood Plan Working Group, with follow up requests via Google Groups. The Working Group first met in January 2019 and began work on drafting the Plan's Vision, Objectives and policy outlines based on the feedback from the Great Chesterford Village Plan, Little Chesterford Village Questionnaire, Little Chesterford Village Walks and consultant reports on Heritage and Landscape. A Steering Group, consisting of Parish Councillors together with a co-ordinator, organised and collated the work and kept both Great Chesterford and Little Chesterford Parish Councils up to date with the progress of the Working Group.

4.4 Feedback on the draft vision and objectives was sought from stakeholders at the Great Chesterford Annual Village Meeting in May 2019, and a community-wide survey in July 2019.

4.5 As a result of these consultations, the wording was updated and further refined following feedback from the independent examiner, who conducted a 'Plan Health check' on the draft plan in January 2022, and from the Plan Examiner in August 2022.

Chapter 5 – The Policies

5.1 Overall Spatial Strategy

Policy Objective: To contribute to the achievement of sustainable development by ensuring that Great and Little Chesterford continue to grow at an organic and sustainable rate, supporting viable and diverse communities and protecting meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Areas for Potential Growth

5.1.1 Great Chesterford village (c.800 households) is the focus for local facilities. Its transport links and vibrant community together with its rural setting make it a popular location, and it has seen a 25% growth in housing in the last nine years.

5.1.2 Little Chesterford (c.90 households) is a small rural village with limited facilities and transport links and therefore has seen a smaller rate of growth (8%) over the same period.

5.1.3 The future of sustainable development in the neighbourhood will depend in large part on proximity of sites to improved services and transport, and must be proportionate to the scale of the two villages.

5.1.4 The current Great Chesterford development limits were established in 2005 (see 2.38–2.40). This Neighbourhood Plan extends them to include both built development and those for which planning permission has been granted, as described in Figures 5.1 and 5.2.

5.1.5 Little Chesterford does not have a proposed or adopted development limit, but has well defined settlement boundaries. This Neighbourhood Plan defines the settlement boundary for this village as described in Figure 5.3.

Strategic Landscape Features

5.1.6 The Neighbourhood Plan Area is an open area of landscape with dramatic changes in topography between the intimate and leafy Cam Valley flood plain and the sweeping Chalk Upland ridges that are highly visible both within and outside the Plan area. The neighbouring villages of Great and Little Chesterford lie along the river banks of the Cam Valley between the northern extremities of the two chalk ridges.

5.1.7 The Chalk Uplands area is comprised wholly of the following Landscape Character areas as defined in the Landscape Character Assessment and shown in Figure 3.1:

- Chesterford Ridge: High Chalk Plateau
- Chalk Upper Slopes: Steep upper dry valleys of chalky boulder clay (above 65m contour)
- Chalk Lower Slopes: Shallow slopes of dry valleys to the east of the B184 (below 65m contour)
- Chesterford Research Park: 150 acres of historic parkland on chalk ridge
- Area 1 has negligible/low capacity for development; areas 2, 3 and 4 have low capacity for development.

The boundaries of the Chalk Uplands area correspond to the totality of this combined area.

5.1.8 The Landscape Character area 5 – River Cam Flood Plain: Flat Alluvial Flood Plain of the River Cam (low capacity for development) – is fully included in the Cam Valley Area.

5.1.9 Additional evidence was examined to further define the Cam Valley Area as follows: fluvial flood zone (Figure 2.10); Topography (Landscape Character Assessment Plan HDA3), Local and Historically Important Views (Figures 5.11–5.14); the current and historical land use; relationship of the land with the settlements; and wildlife habitats (paragraphs 2.48–2.55).

5.1.10 Within and to the north of Great Chesterford village, the area is characterised by the built environment and the Roman Scheduled Monuments. The areas corresponding to the fluvial flood zone were additionally included in the Cam Valley Area.

5.1.11 Between the villages of Great and Little Chesterford, the Cam Valley Area is characterised by open views and popular recreational use centred around the river, footpaths and permissive paths. The area bounded by the 40m contour line and to the west of the footpath was additionally included in the Cam Valley Area, with the exception of land adjacent to the built environment of Granta Close (which did not also form part of the flood zone).

5.1.12 To the south of the High Street in Little Chesterford, the Cam Valley Area is characterised by the open farmland surrounding the Cam, which flows in some parts adjacent to the B1383. The farmland to the west of the B1383 to the parish boundary was included, with the exception of the area around the built form of Bordeaux Farms and the Bordeaux Pit fishing lakes (which are screened from view from the river).

5.1.13 Both Chalk Uplands and the Cam Valley are identified as being of negligible/low or low capacity for development as evidenced in the Landscape Character Assessment, 2017 and are further described in paragraphs 2.34–2.47 and 3.19–3.32.

5.1.14 The following factors must be considered when determining the areas which most contribute towards these strategically important, distinctive and treasured landscapes: the visual and spatial relationship between chalk uplands, the river and their surrounding features; the current and historical land use; the relationship of the land with the settlements; the topography; the importance of the views from areas that have recreational use; and wildlife habitats. The Chalk Uplands and Cam Valley Areas are defined in Figures 5.1–5.3.

Strategic Historic Features

5.1.15 The area is rich in heritage assets, the Scheduled Monuments comprising the Roman Town/Fort/Cemeteries and Roman Temple to the north of Great Chesterford being particularly important. They are of national importance for the historic significance of not only the sites themselves, but for the interrelationship between the sites and the surrounding landscape. This is evidenced in the Historic Environment Assessment 2016, evidence submitted to the Uttlesford Local Plan Regulation 19 Examination 2019, and sightline analysis commissioned by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. These are further described in sections 2.17–2.22 and 3.29–3.45.

5.1.16 The following factors must be considered regarding the strategic historic feature of the setting of the Roman Scheduled sites: the lines of sight from the Roman town and fort to and from the Roman temple along the east/west axis; the lines of sight from the Roman temple eastwards; the historic watercourse; and historic, current and consented land use. The Roman Scheduled Monuments and Setting Zone is defined in Figures 5.1–5.2.

5.1.17 The following evidence was used to determine the Roman Scheduled Monuments and Setting Zone: Figure 2.4 Interrelationships between the Roman Scheduled Monuments and the River Cam and tributaries (which was produced using sight-line analysis), Historic Environment Assessment 2016, The Roman Town of Great Chesterford, Medlycott (2011) [EAA 137], Topography (Landscape Character Assessment Plan HDA3).

5.1.18 The Roman Scheduled Monuments themselves do not form part of the Setting Zone and their boundaries are included in the setting zone boundary determination.

5.1.19 The western boundary of the Setting Zone follows the sight lines from the Roman Temple to the modern embankment of the M11, which forms a hard boundary to the setting of the sites. The southern boundary of the Setting Zone follows the northern boundary of the Roman Town, and the current built environment of the village of Great Chesterford to the B184. West of the B184, it follows the crest of the chalk ridge forming the river valley containing the east/west watercourse that joins the Roman sites, and has both ritual and topographical importance, not only between the sites, but eastward from the altar of the Roman temple along the watercourse towards the valley head. At the eastern boundary, it follows the sight lines and topography around the head of the valley and the short tributaries of the watercourse. To the north, the boundary is formed by the topography of the chalk ridge, following its lower extent and excluding the north/south river tributaries. On the lower flood plain to the west of Stump Cross roundabout, the boundary again follows the extent of the sight line from the Roman temple, joining the western boundary of the M11 embankment to the west.

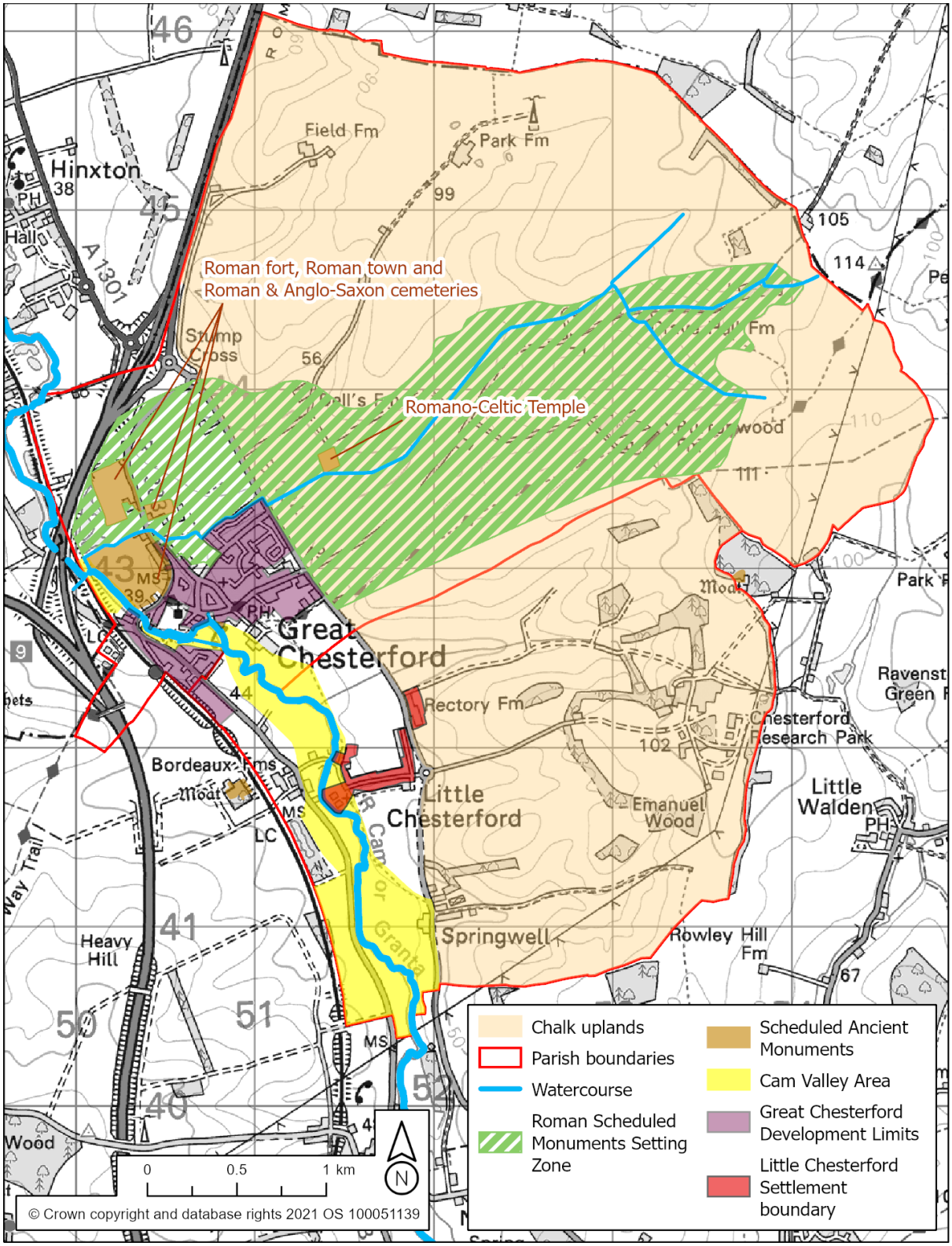

Figure 5.1 Strategic features of Plan Area
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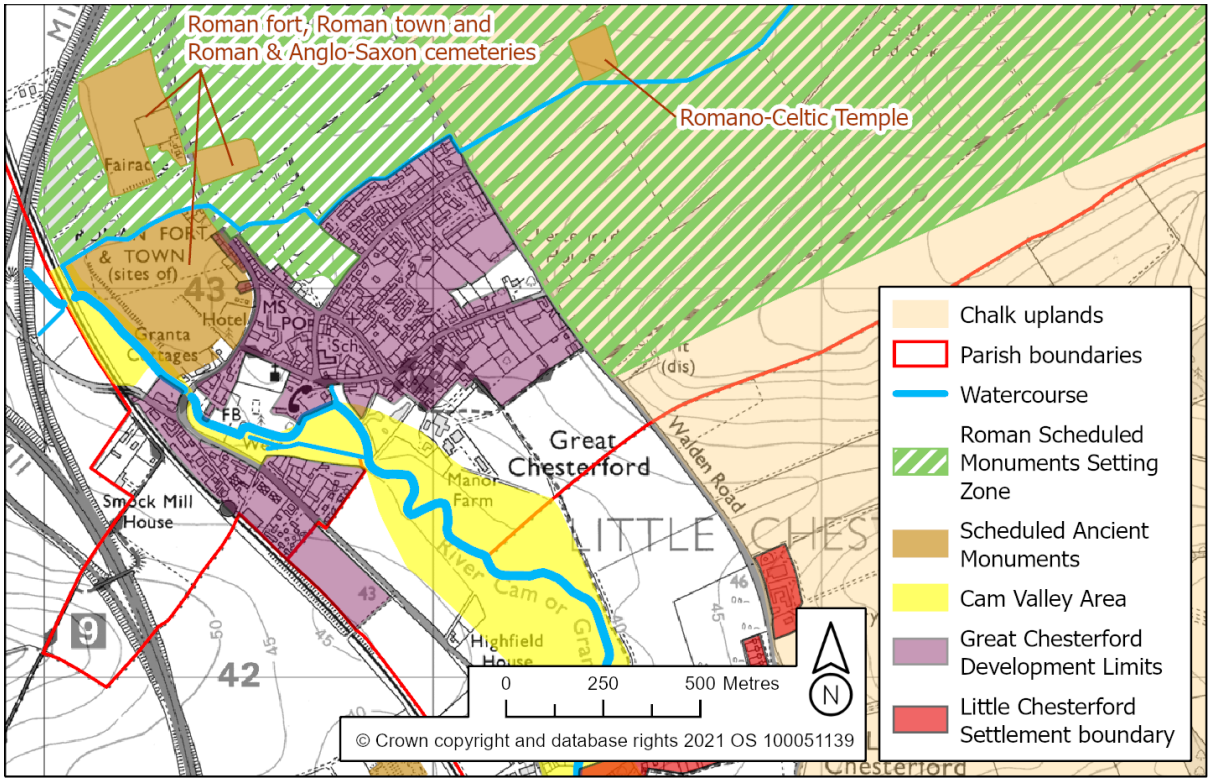

Figure 5.2 Great Chesterford strategic features
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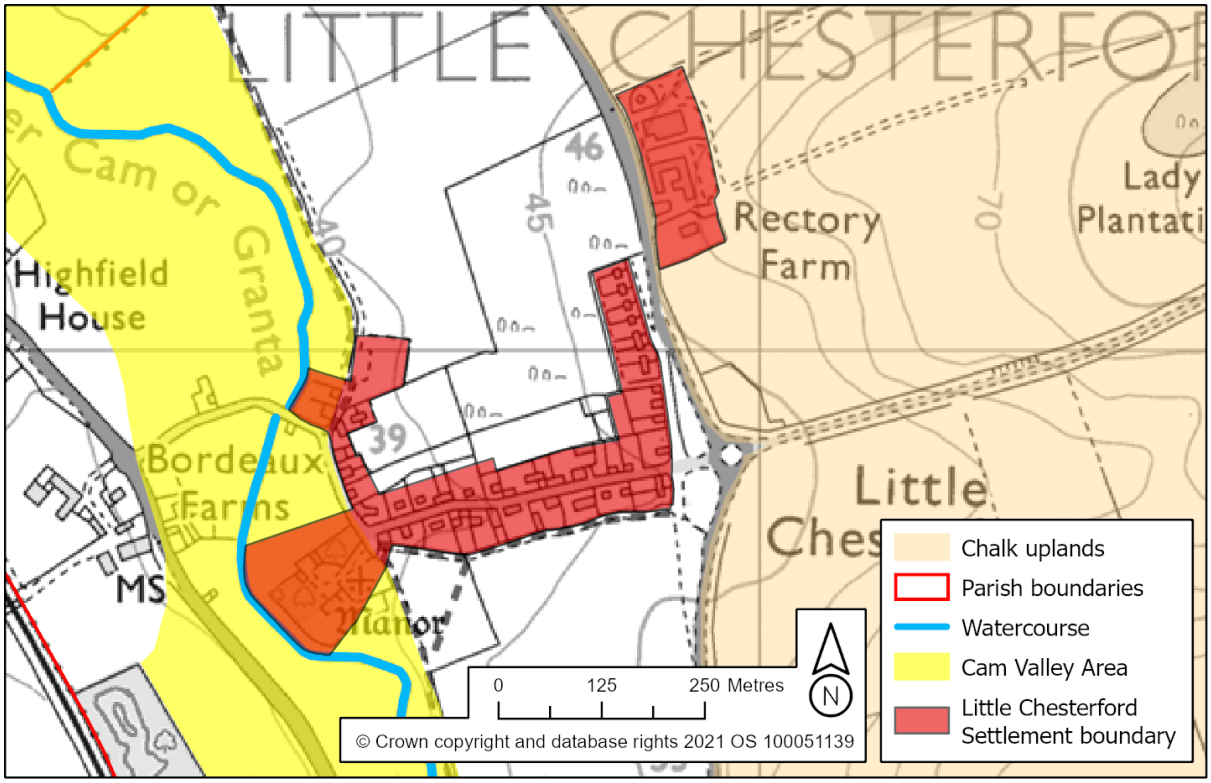

Figure 5.3 Little Chesterford strategic features
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Policy GLCNP/1 – Overall Spatial Strategy including key strategic landscape and heritage sensitivities

1. New development proposals should be within the development limits of Great Chesterford village, defined on Figure 5.2, or land allocated in Policy GLCNP/9.1.

2. Outside of the Great Chesterford development limits or Little Chesterford settlement boundary, the intrinsic character, rural nature and beauty of the area will be recognised and preserved and enhanced, and development proposals should relate to uses that:

- Need to be located in the countryside;
- Are appropriate to exception sites; or
- Are employment uses at sites identified in Figure 5.23 or Figure 5.24.

The following principles apply in areas with specific strategic landscape and heritage sensitivities:

a) Development proposals will be supported in the Chalk Uplands area defined in Figures 5.1–5.3 where they maintain and enhance the characteristics of the open chalk upland landscape.

b) Development proposals will be supported in the Roman Scheduled Monuments and Setting Zone outlined in Figures 5.1 and 5.2 where they preserve and enhance the landscape features and conserve or enhance the significance of the Roman Scheduled Monuments including the inter-visibility between them.

c) Development proposals in the Cam Valley Area as shown in Figures 5.1–5.3 will be supported if they preserve and enhance the landscape features, natural beauty and wildlife habitats of the watercourse, flood plain and river banks.

Photo 10 – Park Farm in the Chalk Uplands

5.2 Settlement Pattern and Separation

Policy Objective: To achieve the Plan's objective by retaining and protecting the individuality and distinctive characteristics of the three main settlements (the villages of Great Chesterford, Little Chesterford and the hamlet of Springwell) within the rural setting of the River Cam Valley, including their distinct settlement patterns.

Settlement Separation

5.2.1 Within the Neighbourhood Plan area, the distinct rural settlements of Great Chesterford, Little Chesterford and Springwell lie within Cam Valley, and the large employment site of Chesterford Research Park lies on the eastern chalk ridge. They are separated from each other by clear open areas of arable fields that have been characterised as having low landscape capacity for further development. This is further described in the Landscape Character Assessment (February 2017) and paragraphs 2.34–2.47 and 3.19–3.32.

5.2.2 The settlements are in a line, broadly north to south in direction, with a clear separation between each compromising arable fields. Most of these open areas have been identified in the Landscape Character assessment as having low landscape capacity for future development.

5.2.3 To the north of the Neighbourhood Plan area are the village of Hinxton and the Wellcome Genome Trust Campus. Planning permission has been granted for a mixed development including 1,500 dwellings extending the settlement boundary southward as far as the northern boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area, bounded by the A1307/M11. The transition from the national road infrastructure and open plain to the north to the river valley containing the settlements in the Neighbourhood Plan area adds greatly to their sense of place.

5.2.4 These gaps between the Hinxton/Wellcome Genome Trust Campus and the national road network, Great Chesterford, Little Chesterford, Springwell and Chesterford Research Park serve as a rural buffer or visual break between them; they also protect the character and rural setting of settlements. These are defined as 'Separation Zones' in this Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan (see Figures 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6).

5.2.5 The distinctive settlement patterns of Great Chesterford, Little Chesterford and Springwell are essential to their character. Great Chesterford has developed a nucleated development pattern, Little Chesterford has retained a historic linear development pattern of a single row of dwellings to the sides of the road within well-defined settlement edges, and Springwell is a tightly clustered small hamlet. See the Landscape Character Assessment 2017 and sections 2.19, 2.27 and 2.29. The settlement boundary of Little Chesterford is defined in Figure 5.3.

5.2.6 Backland development in Little Chesterford would harm the character of its distinctive linear settlement pattern. 'Backland development' refers to any proposed housing development sites that do not have a direct frontage onto the existing highway.

5.2.7 The character of the small clustered hamlet of Springwell would be harmed by new housing development, as given in the explanation by the Planning Inspectorate (Appeal Reference APP/C1570/A/14/2226566) for refusal of a small development of

six houses, citing the effect on the character and appearance of the area, as well as the sustainability of its location. This would also be relevant to any other site in Springwell (see paragraphs 2.29 and 2.30).

5.2.8 The boundaries of the Separation Zones are largely determined by the topography and current and consented land use (see Plan HDA3 from Landscape Character Assessment).

5.2.9 The purpose of the *Northern Gateway Separation Zone* is to provide and serve as a rural buffer or visual break between Great Chesterford and the consented very large development to the north at Hinxton. It is to prevent coalescence between settlements and to provide a transition between the village of Great Chesterford and the national road infrastructure and open plain to the north to the river valley. The boundaries are therefore defined by the embankment of the M11, the B184 and the built environment/development limits of Great Chesterford.

5.2.10 The purpose of the *Great and Little Chesterford Separation Zone* is to provide a rural buffer or visual break between Great Chesterford and Little Chesterford and to prevent coalescence between settlements. The southern boundaries of this zone are therefore formed by the settlement boundaries of Little Chesterford north of the High Street, the western boundary by the parish boundary to the west, the northern boundary by the built limits of Great Chesterford, additionally excluding both the consented site at Chest 9 and the area between the site and the southern built limits of the Great Chesterford village at Manor Farm. To the east, the boundary is the B184.

5.2.11 The purpose of the *Little Chesterford and Springwell Separation Zone* is to provide a buffer between Little Chesterford and Springwell and to prevent coalescence between settlements. The northern boundaries of this zone are therefore the southern limits of the built environment at Little Chesterford, and extend aligned to the southern edge of the settlement at Springwell, and extend southwards to preserve the area between the two settlements, the southern boundary being aligned with the extent of the built environment at Springwell, extending across to the B1383. Due to the rising topography of the land, an area to the west of the road is excluded, and the separation zone boundary rejoins the parish boundary to leave the area to the south of Bordeaux Farms open.

5.2.12 The purpose of the *Little Chesterford and Chesterford Research Park Separation Zone* is to provide a buffer between Little Chesterford and Chesterford Research Park, and the limits are largely determined by the topography and green features of the area. The western boundary of this area is the green screening to the west of the village; the eastern boundary is formed by Emanuel Wood, and its continuing field boundary hedgerows. The southern boundary is formed by the green screening that forms the visual boundary to the north of Springwell, and its visual continuation along field boundaries to Emanuel Wood. The northern boundary is formed by the chalk ridge just to the north of the northern built limits running to the western boundary of the Chesterford Research Park.

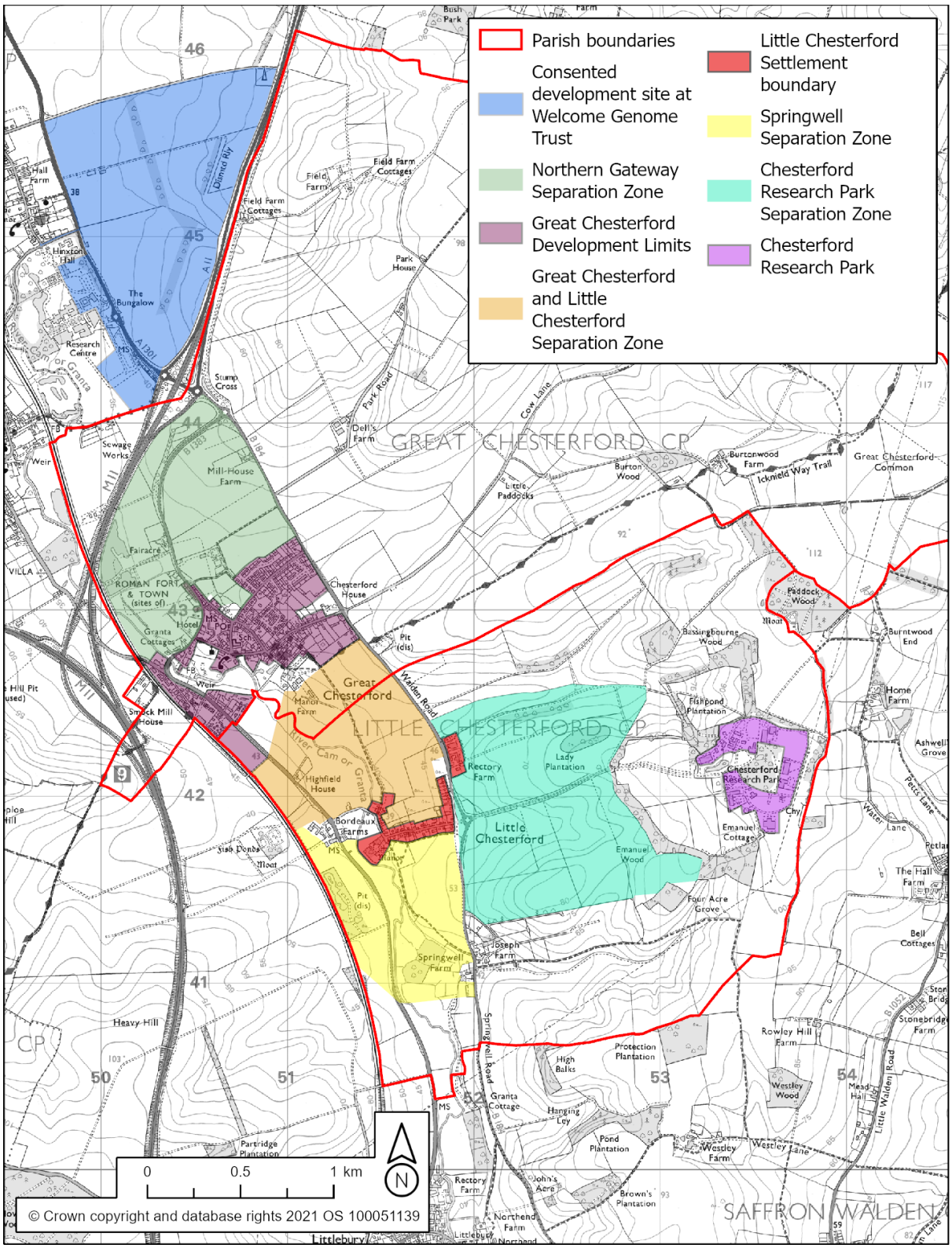

Figure 5.4 Separation zones overview
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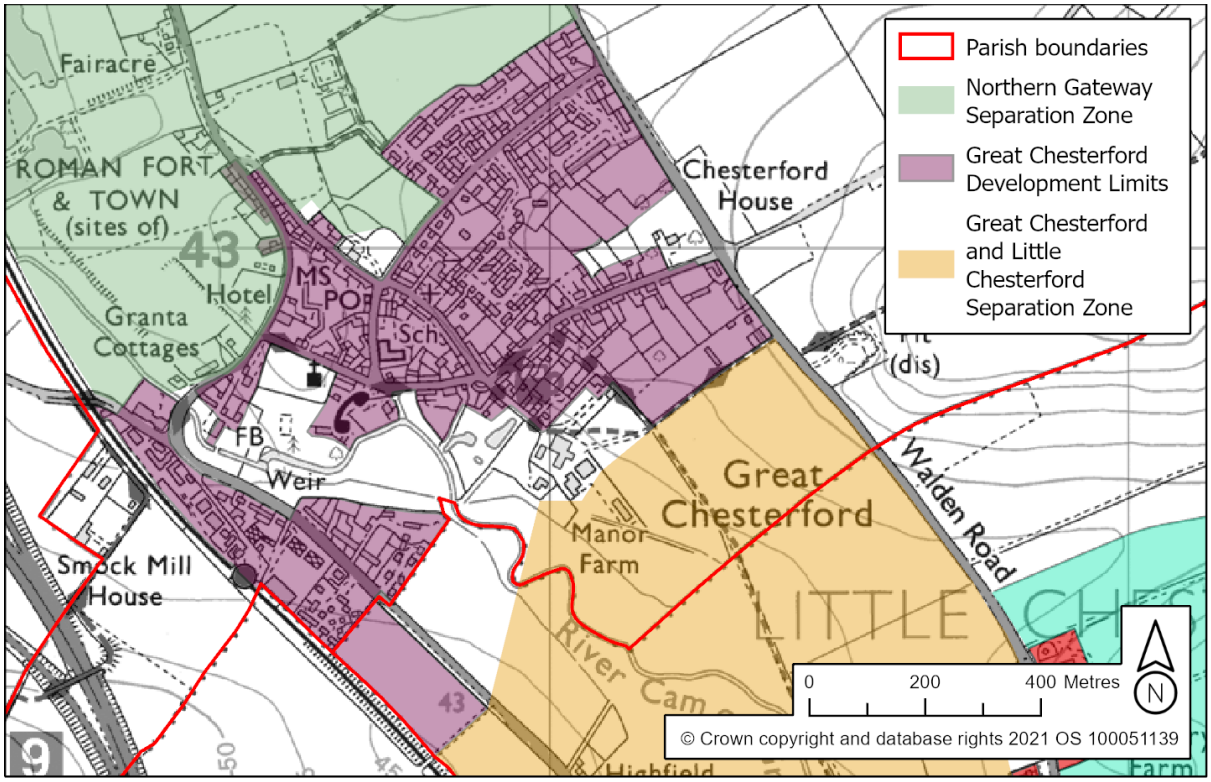

Figure 5.5 Great Chesterford separation zones
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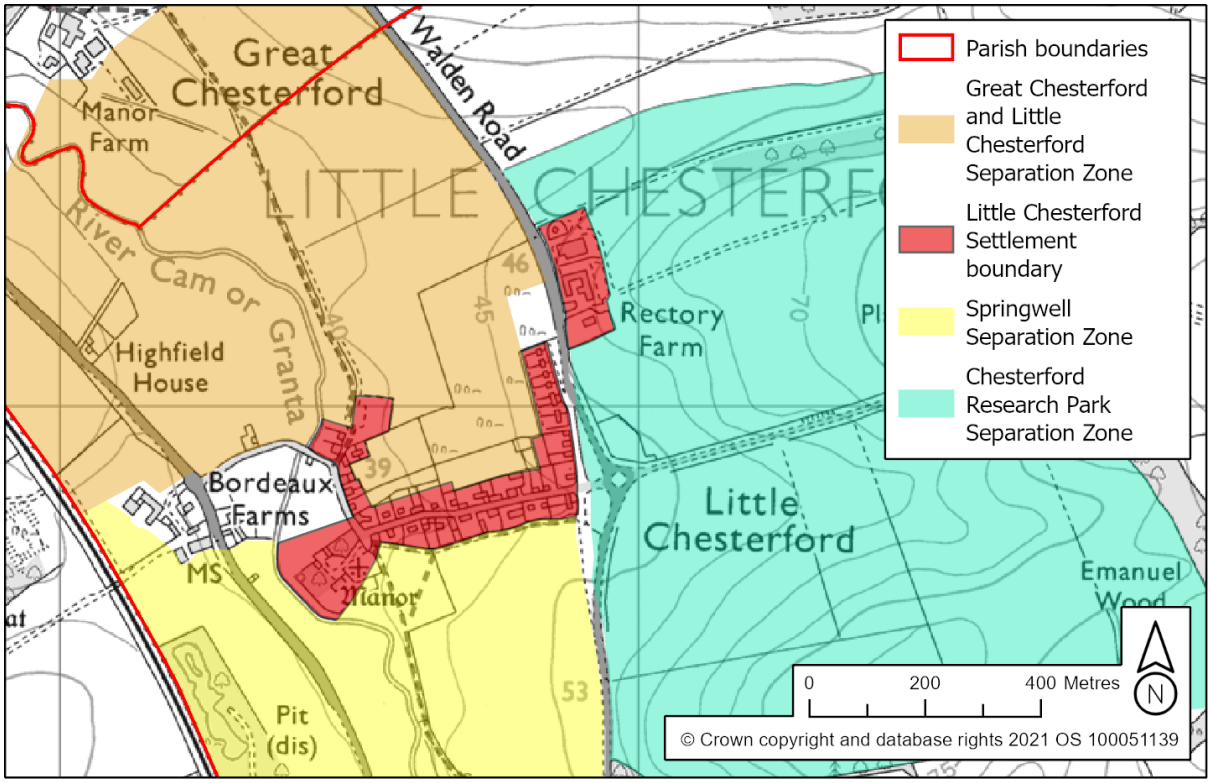

Figure 5.6 Little Chesterford separation zones
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Policy GLCNP/2 – Settlement Pattern and Separation

Outside the Great Chesterford development limits or Little Chesterford settlement boundary:

1. Development proposals in the following Separation Zones (Figure 5.4) should either be appropriate to a location outside a settlement, or otherwise avoid significant harm to the purpose of the Separation Zone in providing a rural buffer or visual break between settlements and/or protecting the character and rural setting of settlements:

    - Little Chesterford/Chesterford Research Park Separation Zone
    - Little Chesterford/Springwell Separation Zone
    - Great and Little Chesterford Separation Zone
    - Northern Gateway Separation Zone

Within the villages of Great Chesterford and Little Chesterford:

2. Any development should be sensitively designed, respecting the historic nature and historic architecture, conforming to the existing development patterns: nucleated in Great Chesterford and linear in Little Chesterford.

3. Backland development in Little Chesterford should not result in significant detrimental harm to the linear character of the village.

Photo 11 – Northern Gateway Area of Separation with Hinxton (and the consented site for 1,500 houses beyond the separation zone) in the background

5.3 Getting Around

Policy Objective: To achieve the Plan's objective by promoting safe and sustainable transport by promoting pedestrian use of railway station, safe pedestrian and cycle access to village services and between villages, road safety for all in village streets and promoting and enhancing cycling routes south to Saffron Walden and north towards Cambridge.

5.3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Area is sited on the main route between the university city of Cambridge and the market town of Saffron Walden, close to the M11, and having a direct rail connection with Cambridge and London.

5.3.2 The centres of both villages are bypassed to the east by the B184 and the west by the B1383, which link the National Road network to the north of the villages to Saffron Walden and Stansted to the south.

5.3.3 The B1383 (formerly the A11) is a main route north to south and regularly used as a relief road when there are closures on the M11. For example, Highways England records 147 instances of partial or full road closures on full length of the M11 in just over one year, (from 1 January 2018 to 27 January 2019). It is reduced in speed through the village of Great Chesterford to 30mph but speeding is a significant issue, as is the pinch point along Newmarket Road between Church Street and Carmen Street where the road is very narrow and the pavement is too narrow for a pushchair / wheelchair. The B1383 is also unsightly as it bends round past the turning to Ickleton and has an overly urban feel.

5.3.4 The B184 links the national road network to Saffron Walden, and is reduced in speed to 40mph on the approaches to the roundabout which leads to Chesterford Research Park and the village of Little Chesterford. Speeding is also a significant issue on this road, and Essex County Council records one serious and one slight injury on this road from 1 January 2017 to 30 September 2020. The hamlet of Springwell experienced a fatality in 2001.

5.3.5 Great Chesterford contains three main internal thoroughfares: the High Street, which moving from east to west becomes South Street and then Church Street; School Street, which continues north onto Jacksons Lane; and Carmen and Carmel Streets. Little Chesterford contains one main thoroughfare; the High Street. These roads are narrow in many places, with listed buildings abutting the roadway, and frequent sections where there are no or narrow pavements.

5.3.6 These internal routes are frequently used as 'rat runs', especially the High Street in Little Chesterford, which forms the more direct route to Chesterford Research Park and to the north of Saffron Walden from the B1383. This is despite the efforts of the management team of Chesterford Research Park, which is committed to sustainable transport policies in order to reduce road and parking congestion (see Policy GLCNP/8 Employment). In the Little Chesterford Village Survey, 73% of respondents expressed safety concerns about volume and speed of traffic through the village.

5.3.7 The railway station (located to the south-west of Great Chesterford) is frequently or occasionally used by 68% of respondents to the Great Chesterford Survey and 63% of respondents to the Little Chesterford survey. Of those aged 5–18 in Great

Chesterford, 89% said they used the train at least sometimes. Trains to Cambridge take approximately 20 minutes and an hour and ten minutes to London. The route from Chesterford to both Cambridge and London is the 'stopper' service, as opposed to the Stansted Airport service or the fast route to London which, whilst they pass through Great Chesterford, do not stop there. Network Rail has stated that this is not likely to change.

5.3.8 There is a bus service between Saffron Walden and Cambridge which stops in the centre of the village of Great Chesterford and in Little Chesterford on the B184. Unlike the rail service, it is not well used, with 77% of respondents to the Great Chesterford Survey and 95% of respondents to the Little Chesterford Survey saying that they never or hardly ever use it. This was also reflected in those aged 5–18 years in Great Chesterford, with 57% saying they never used the bus service. The limitations of the service, including frequency and coverage, mean that it is unlikely to be a preferred option for those who have access to alternative means of transport. It remains an important service to those without alternatives.

5.3.9 An unpaved public footpath runs south from the end of Rose Lane/Manor Lane in Great Chesterford to the High Street in Little Chesterford alongside the river and continues to the hamlet of Springwell, as shown in Figure 5.21. There is no footway linking directly to Saffron Walden from the villages; an indirect footpath leads from Springwell up to the top of the chalk ridge to the east and down into Saffron Walden at Catons Lane.

5.3.10 Most people know where the public footpaths are around the villages (see Figure 2.11); and around 65% of those people in Great Chesterford use them without difficulty. The Little Chesterford Village Survey indicated a desire for better linkage of footpaths to other villages/towns.

5.3.11 Parking is a concern in both parishes, as reflected in the Village Surveys, with reference to parking during school drop-off and pick-up times in Great Chesterford being a particular issue, and pavement parking in Little Chesterford causing concern.

5.3.12 The Great Chesterford Village Plan indicated there is significant support within the parish for improved cycle routes, while in Little Chesterford, 71% of residents supported the creation of new cycle routes, with 43% indicating they would use them.

5.3.13 The Essex Highway report on Great Chesterford Cycle Route Feasibility Study April 2014 (DC1920) defines the need for improved cycle paths to connect Great and Little Chesterford to Saffron Walden. Option 1, also supported by 2014 Uttlesford Cycling Strategy, is the preferred route. Owing to the total cost of the project, it is broken down into eight sections (see Figure 5.7).

5.3.14 The Great Chesterford Primary Academy Survey 2019 highlighted that the children's top two preferred modes of transport are on foot and on wheels (such as bikes or scooters).

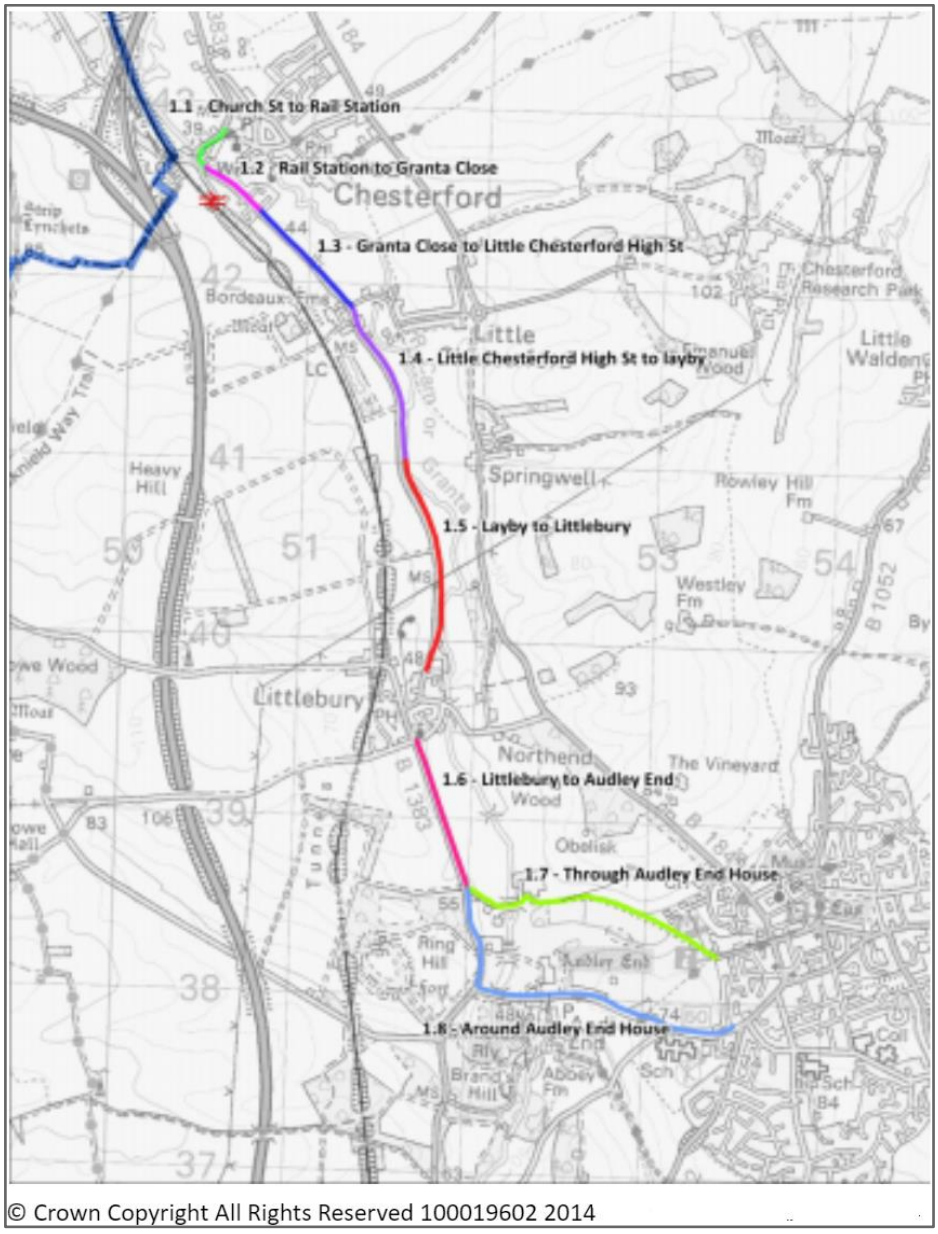

Figure 5.7 Great Chesterford Cycle Route Feasibility Study 2014 – Option 1

5.3.15 Development already consented within Great Chesterford on London Road (Enterprise Developments – Woodland Rise) has installed section 1.2 of the preferred route, albeit use for cycles has yet to be authorised. Further development consented on London Road is not providing a contribution to section 1.3, but rather putting in a separate section of cycleway on the west side of the road linking it to the station – critical to the sustainability of that site, but not contributing to the overall scheme.

5.3.16 The overall strategy is to create a cycle path linking both villages to Saffron Walden (evidenced in the 2014 feasibility study) and also to the Wellcome Genome Trust/ Sanger Institute, the latter already being linked to the Cambridge cycleway system.

5.3.17 Any development in the Neighbourhood Plan area should provide or contribute to:

- improvement of existing pavements serving the development to make them more accessible for all users, including children and those with limited mobility.
- implementation of sections of the proposed Chesterford to Saffron Walden cycle route and better cycle and pedestrian connections to Great Chesterford train station.

5.3.18 Any development in Great Chesterford whose principal access is the B1383 will provide/contribute towards improvements to the existing narrow and unsafe pavement along the B1383.

5.3.19 Any development in or adjoining Great Chesterford will provide/contribute towards public realm improvements along the B1383 at the bend/junction with the road to Ickleton (which results in de-urbanising this stretch and improving the street scene).

5.3.20 Any development in or adjoining the south of Great Chesterford whose principal access is the B1383 will provide/fund better pedestrian links from the southern part of Great Chesterford village to the village centre, including the creation of a route over the River Cam to facilitate pedestrian access from the southern part of Great Chesterford village to the village centre.

5.3.21 Any development in the Neighbourhood Plan Area which will increase traffic movements through Little Chesterford will contribute to mitigation measures to improve road safety.

Policy GLCNP/3 – Getting Around

1. Development proposals should include suitable provision for adequate sustainable transport infrastructure and be designed to prioritise pedestrian and cycle movements.

2. Proposed development should where appropriate be capable of providing direct access to safe walking routes to all village amenities including provision of pedestrian crossings as appropriate. Village amenities are defined as:
   a) In Great Chesterford: the railway station, shop, surgeries, school, preschool and the Chesterford Community Centre;
   b) In Little Chesterford: the Village Hall and Church, and the bus stops on the B184.

3. The following on-site infrastructure should be provided on any proposed development as appropriate:
   a) Provision of vehicle charging points for all dwellings and parking standards in accordance with the Essex Design Guide or the updated Essex Parking Standards Guidance (whichever is more recent).
   b) Provision of adequate footway pavements which link with the existing pedestrian network.

4. Where directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development, off-site contributions or physical infrastructure works shall be sought for pedestrian and cycle infrastructure improvements and road safety measures, including those listed at paragraphs 5.3.17–5.3.21.

5.4 Landscape Characteristics and Views

Policy Objective: To conserve and enhance important landscape characteristics and views.

Landscape Characteristics

5.4.1 The Landscape Character Assessment 2017 (LCA) determines the parishes' local landscape character, identifying key characteristics and sensitivities, both in terms of character and visibility. The report sets out landscape capacity and development guidelines. It does not, however, take account of the historic environment or other important factors such as settlement patterns which are to be found in other policies.

5.4.2 This LCA is used by both Parish Councils to inform planning decisions at parish level and its conclusions are endorsed, with some additional limitations.

5.4.3 Paragraphs 3.15–3.28 and Figure 3.1 give a detailed commentary on the findings of the Landscape Character Assessment and the recommendations it made in relation to the capacity for development within Great and Little Chesterford.

5.4.4 In order to conserve and enhance the landscape setting of the three main settlements of Great Chesterford, Little Chesterford and Springwell, evidence from the Landscape Character Assessments and Village Walks was reviewed to identify areas of green screening that are key to maintaining the sense of place of the settlements and their approaches. Consideration was given to their role in maintaining the green and leafy nature of the settlements in their rural landscape; the transition from open landscape and views from the road infrastructure to the built environment; characteristic local flora (e.g., the distinctive stand of pines from the northern approach to Springwell), and the absence of other protected characteristics (e.g., woodlands identified as important or ancient). These key areas of green screening are shown in Figures 5.8 and 5.9. These figures also identify the special verges (see paragraphs 2.43 and 2.47) within the Plan area.

5.4.5 Figure 5.10 identifies the woodland, ancient woodland, important woodland within the Plan area (see paragraphs 2.33, 2.39, 2.45, 2.48, 2.48, 2.53 and 2.54).

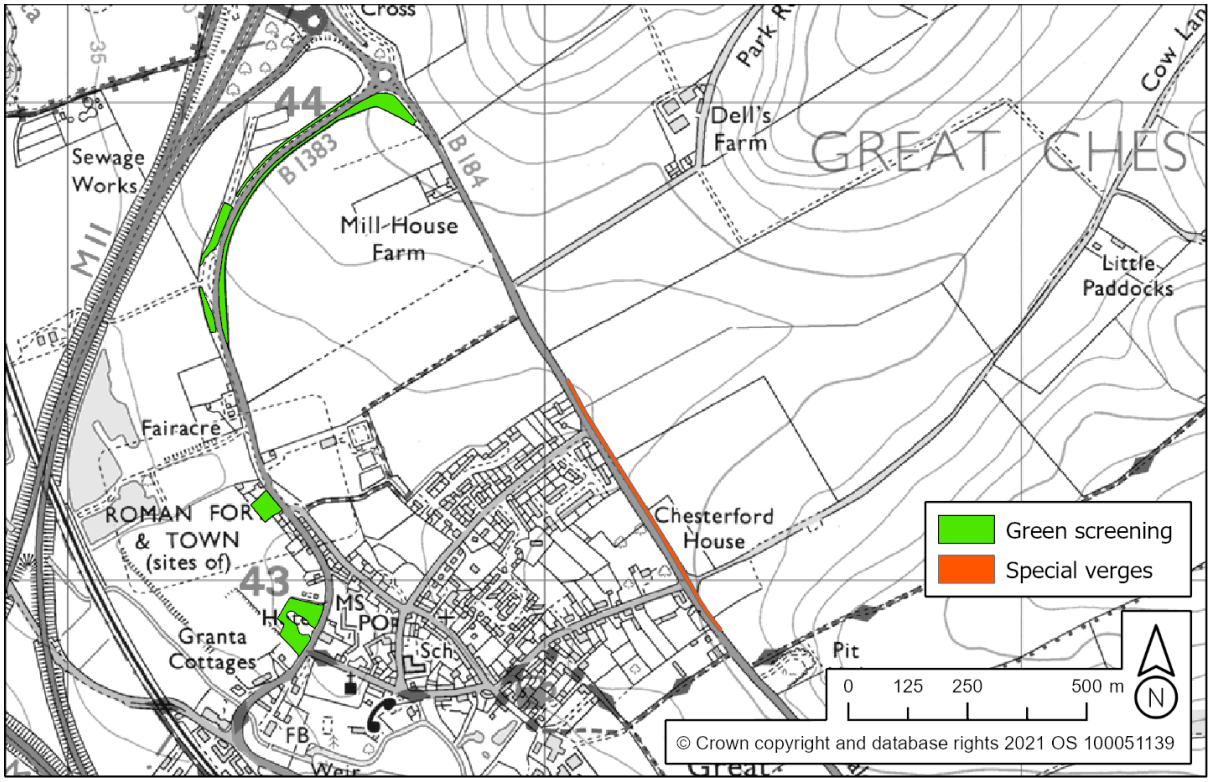

Figure 5.8 Great Chesterford green screening and special verges
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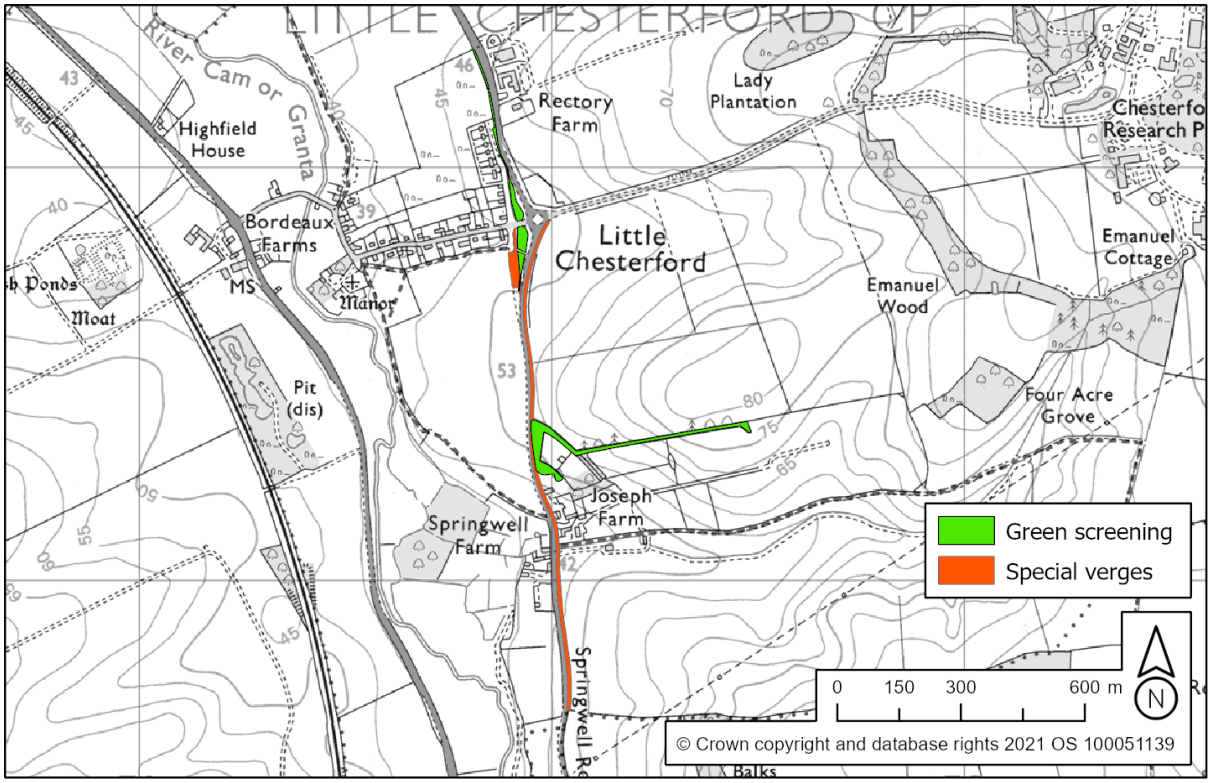

Figure 5.9 Little Chesterford green screening and special verges
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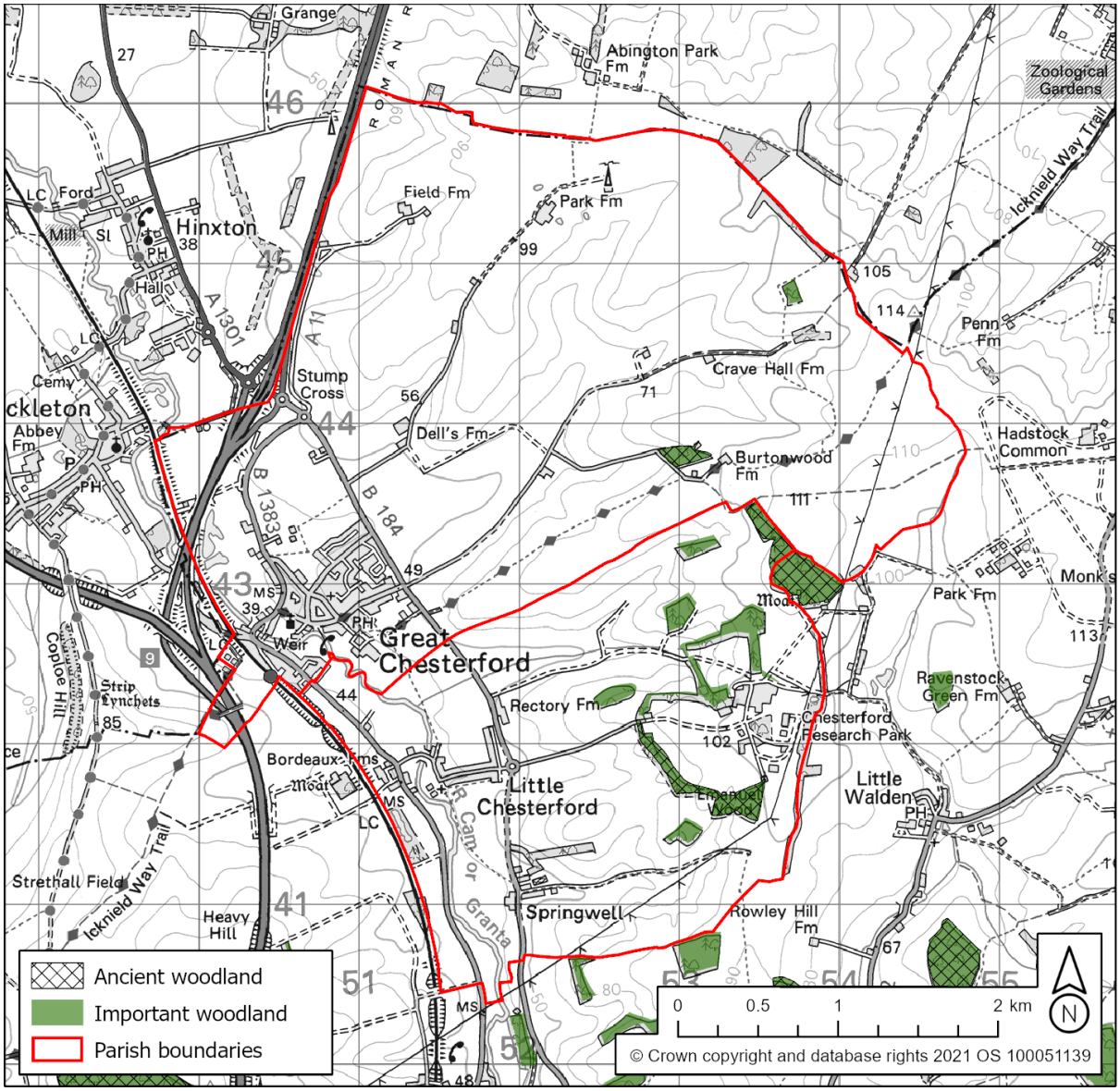

Figure 5.10 Woodland, ancient woodland, important woodland
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Policy GLCNP/4a – Landscape Character

Development will be supported if:

a) It is appropriate, having regard to the landscape sensitivity and landscape value attributed to the landscape character area in which it is located, as described in the Chesterfords' Landscape Character Assessment 2017;
b) It conserves or enhances the landscape pattern including woodland areas (see Figure 5.10), hedgerows and individual trees, and does not diminish the role they play in views across the landscape;
c) It conserves or enhances the historic landscape character of field patterns and field size, greens, commons or verges;
d) It conserves or enhances special verges and green screening (see Figures 5.8 and 5.9); and
e) It conserves or enhances the landscape significance and better reveals cultural and heritage links.

Views

5.4.6 The Landscape Character Assessment 2017 identified that one of the key elements of the landscape character of Great and Little Chesterford is the views to and from the villages and the Chesterford Ridge: "*Due to the open nature of the landscape and the dramatic changes in topography, there are important views from the villages up to Chesterford Ridge and to the opposite valley side to Strethall Ridge. From the ridges, there are impressive views across the valley landscape, to which the villages contribute."* These panoramic views to and from the Chesterford Ridge and its chalk upper slopes are valued by the community, especially where they incorporate important local landmarks such as Scheduled Monuments and historic buildings. These views should be collectively and generally maintained and enhanced in addition to the individually identified views defined below.

5.4.7 A number of individual Important Views were identified within UDC's Conservation Area Appraisal 2007 (Section 3, Figures 4–7) and in Appendix 2 of the Historic Environment Assessment 2016. The views identified and listed in these three documents are set out in Table 5.1 and shown in Figures 5.11–5.14.

5.4.8 The Important Views Designation Report was produced to accompany the Plan and provides evidence to support Policy GLCNP/4b. It contains an assessment of the Significant Views identified in the Historic Environment Assessment, the Important Views identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal and the Community Designated Views identified by residents. A summary of these views is provided in Table 5.1 below.

5.4.9 Consultations with residents have identified specific views that are important to them, and which make their village an attractive place to live. The most common of these identified in village walks and surveys have been designated as Locally Important Views. Those which duplicated previously identified Important Views have not been included. As Little Chesterford does not have a Conservation Area, notwithstanding its historic character, the majority of these views are within this parish. These have been identified for the purpose of preventing development proposals that would have a detrimental impact on an Important View, by way of their scale, height, use of materials or lighting. These Locally Important Views are included in Table 5.1 and identified in Figures 5.13 and 5.14.

5.4.10 Important Views are those identified by reports in the evidence base, including the Conservation Area Appraisal (named Important Views in that report) and Historic Environment Assessment (named Significant Views in that report). Locally Important Views are those identified by the community through surveys and village walks (named Community Designated views in the Important Views and Locally Important Views Designation Report March 2022).

Table 5.1

View	Description
1 – Great Chesterford and Roman town from Icknield Way [Important View]	From the Icknield Way, the view north-west to south-west is of the Scheduled Roman town and Great Chesterford Conservation Area beyond.
2 – Great Chesterford from Little Chesterford [Important View]	From Little Chesterford, this view stretches across fields and along the river valley towards the Great Chesterford Conservation Area.
3 – The Roman Town from the Roman temple [Important View]	From the farm track at the north-west corner of the Scheduled temple, this view looks towards the Scheduled Roman town (the open area behind the telegraph pole).
4 – The Roman temple from the Roman fort [Important View]	From the footpath on the eastern edge of the Scheduled Roman fort looking eastwards to the temple site (in the slight valley behind the prominent tree in the far distance).
5 – The Roman fort and town [Important View]	View from the footpath on the eastern edge of the Scheduled Roman fort looking westwards into the fort and the Roman town site behind it.
6 – The Roman temple from Cow Lane [Important View]	View from Cow Lane across the Scheduled Roman temple site (in the middle distance) showing the open rural landscape setting.
7 – The Roman town from Cow Lane [Important View]	View from Cow Lane to the Scheduled Roman town (in the far distance) showing the open rural landscape setting.
8 – The Roman town from Newmarket Road (i) [Important View]	This view from an area of Newmarket Road looks into the Scheduled Roman town.
9 – The Roman town from Newmarket Road (ii) [Important View]	This view from an area of Newmarket Road looks into the Scheduled Roman town.
10 – The Roman town from Newmarket Road (iii) [Important View]	This view from an area of Newmarket Road looks into the Scheduled Roman town.
11 – The Roman town from across the River Cam [Important View]	From the bridge across the River Cam this view looks over the Scheduled Roman town.
12 – Horse River Green and the River Cam [Important View]	The view looks into Horse River Green and over the River Cam.
13 – Along the River Cam from Horse River Green [Important View]	View from Horse River Green looking north-west along the River Cam.
14 – Bishop's House grounds from All Saints' churchyard [Important View]	From All Saints' churchyard, Great Chesterford this view looks into Bishop's House grounds.
15 – All Saints' Church from Newmarket Road [Important View]	From the junction of Newmarket Road and Church Road the view looks towards All Saints Church, Great Chesterford.
16 – King's Mill from London Road [Important View]	From London Road the view looks into Great Chesterford Conservation Area and King's Mill.
17 – Carmen Street [Important View]	This view from the edge of the Great Chesterford Conservation Area faces out into Carmen Street.
18 – The paddocks from Carmen Street [Important View]	View from Carmen Street into the paddocks on the edge of the Conservation Area.
19 – Curve of Roman town walls along Newmarket Road [Important View]	This view looks westwards along Newmarket Road showing the curve of the road as it echoes the Roman town walls.

20 – Great Chesterford High Street [Important View]	This view looks westward down the High Street, Great Chesterford.
21 – All Saints' Church from Church Street (i) [Important View]	This view from Church Street entrance looks at the whole of All Saints' church, Great Chesterford.
22 – All Saints' Church from churchyard [Important View]	This view from the churchyard looks over All Saints' church, Great Chesterford.
23 – All Saints' Church from Carmen Street [Important View]	View of All Saints' Church, Great Chesterford from Carmen Street, across the school playing field.
24 – St Mary the Virgin church, from the carpark [Important View]	View of St Mary the Virgin Church, Little Chesterford from the church car park.
25 – The Manor, Little Chesterford from the churchyard [Important View]	View from the churchyard of St Mary the Virgin Church, Little Chesterford to The Manor.
26 – The Manor, Little Chesterford, from the High Street [Important View]	View from the High Street, Little Chesterford close to the bridge looking southwards to The Manor.
27 – Bordeaux Farm from London Road [Important View]	View of Little Bordeaux Farm from London Road of Springwell Hamlet, looking westward with the farm buildings in the foreground and the scheduled monument in the near distance.
28 – Springwell from Walden Road [Locally Important View]	View from Walden Road of Springwell Hamlet, looking northwards with the listed buildings of Springwell Farm to the west and Joseph's Farm and Springwell Cottage to the north-east.
29 – Springwell from public footpath [Locally Important View]	View from the public footpath leading east from Springwell, looking down the hill towards the hamlet.
30 – Cross-valley view above Springwell [Locally Important View]	View from the public footpath that runs north/south along chalk uplands above the hamlet of Springwell, looking west across the valley.
31 – High Street, Little Chesterford, eastern end [Locally Important View]	View looking down High Street, Little Chesterford from the junction with the old Walden Road.
32 – Centre of High Street, Little Chesterford [Locally Important View]	View looking along the High Street, Little Chesterford adjacent to Bank Cottage.
33 – High Street, Little Chesterford, Western End [Locally Important View]	View looking along the High Street, Little Chesterford adjacent to the Reading Room Cottages.
34 – St Mary the Virgin Church, Little Chesterford along Back Lane footpath [Locally Important View]	View looking west along Back Lane public footpath towards St Mary the Virgin Church, Little Chesterford
35 – Cam valley from Back Lane footpath, Little Chesterford [Locally Important View]	View looking south from the Back Lane public footpath towards Springwell.
36 – River Cam from Historic Bridge at Little Chesterford, southward [Locally Important View]	View to the south from the historic bridge at Little Chesterford along the River Cam.
37 – River Cam from Historic Bridge at Little Chesterford, northward [Locally Important View]	View to the south from the historic bridge at Little Chesterford along the River Cam.
38 – River Cam valley from green at Manor Cottages, Little Chesterford [Locally Important View]	View along river valley and to chalk uplands from the green adjacent to Manor Cottages, Little Chesterford.

39 – Paddock from Carmen Street [Important View]	View looking east from Carmen Street over the paddock.
40 – Across the River Cam from Horse River Green [Important View]	View looking south-west across the River Cam from Horse River Green.
41 – All Saints' Church from Church Street (ii) [Important View]	View of All Saints' Church looking south-east.
42 – Paddock from Jacksons Lane [Important View]	View looking north-west from Jacksons Lane over the paddock.
43 – From Cow Lane [Locally Important View]	View between Little Paddocks and Grumble Hall towards Strethall and Park Farm.
44 – From permissive path linking Grumble Hall to Park Farm [Locally Important View]	View towards Great Chesterford and to the ridge at Strethall.

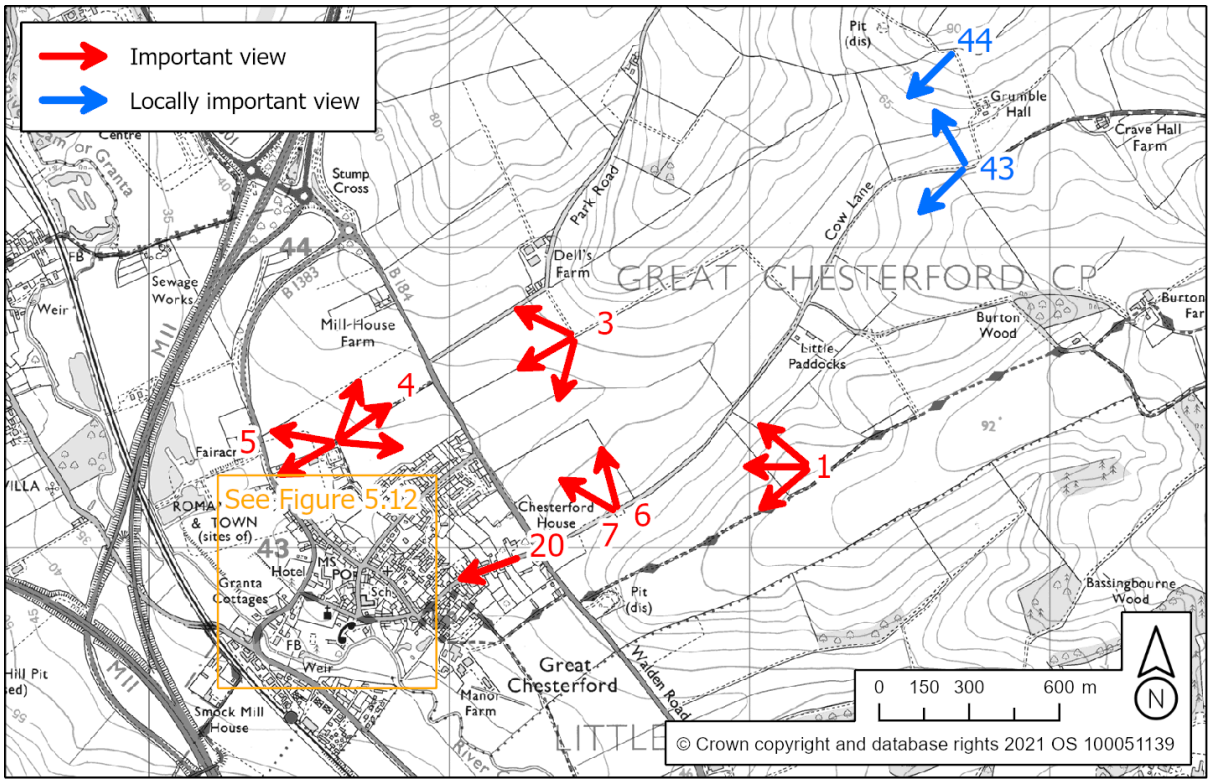

Figure 5.11 Great Chesterford Important Views – overview
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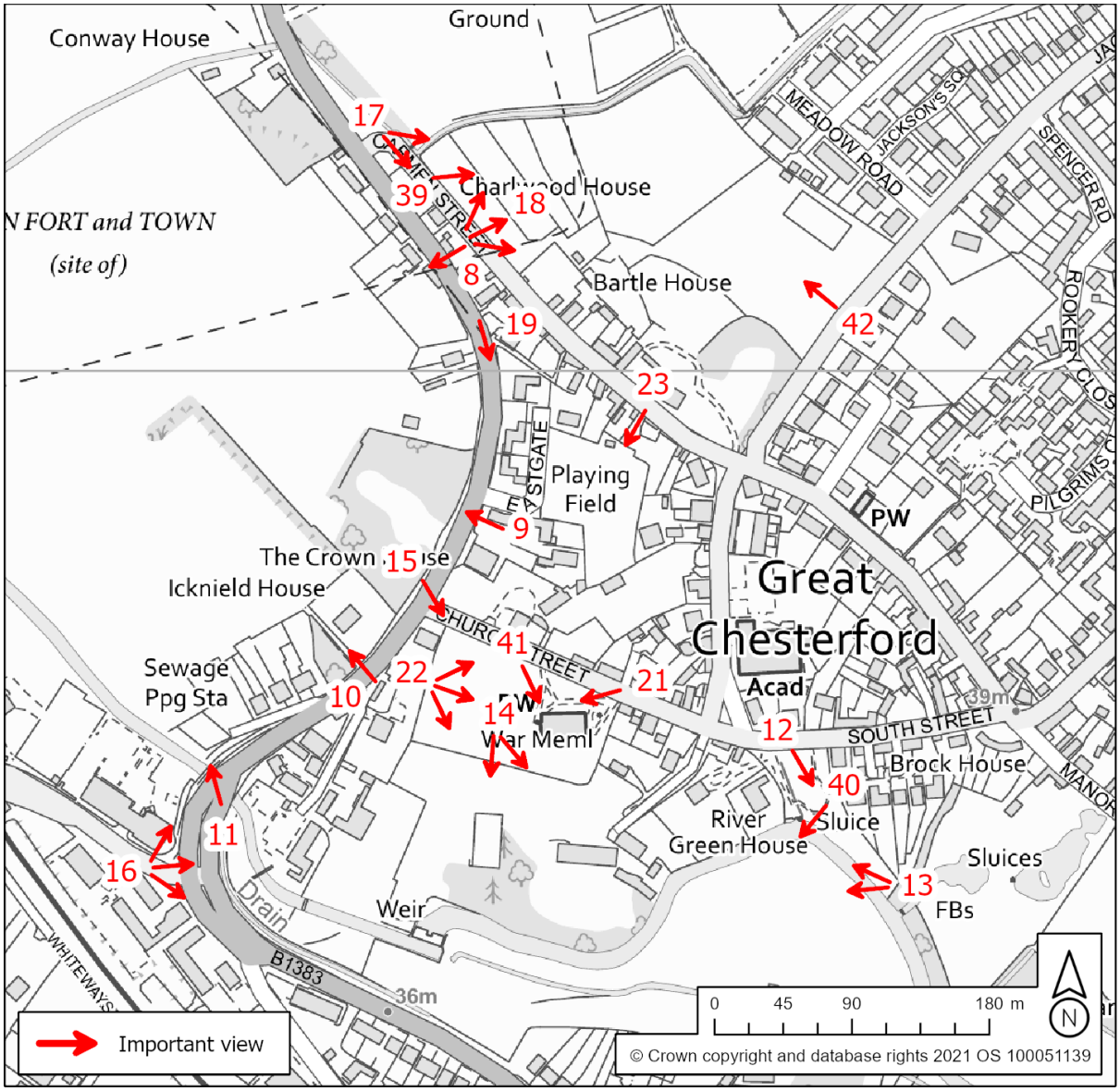

Figure 5.12 Great Chesterford Important views – detailed inset
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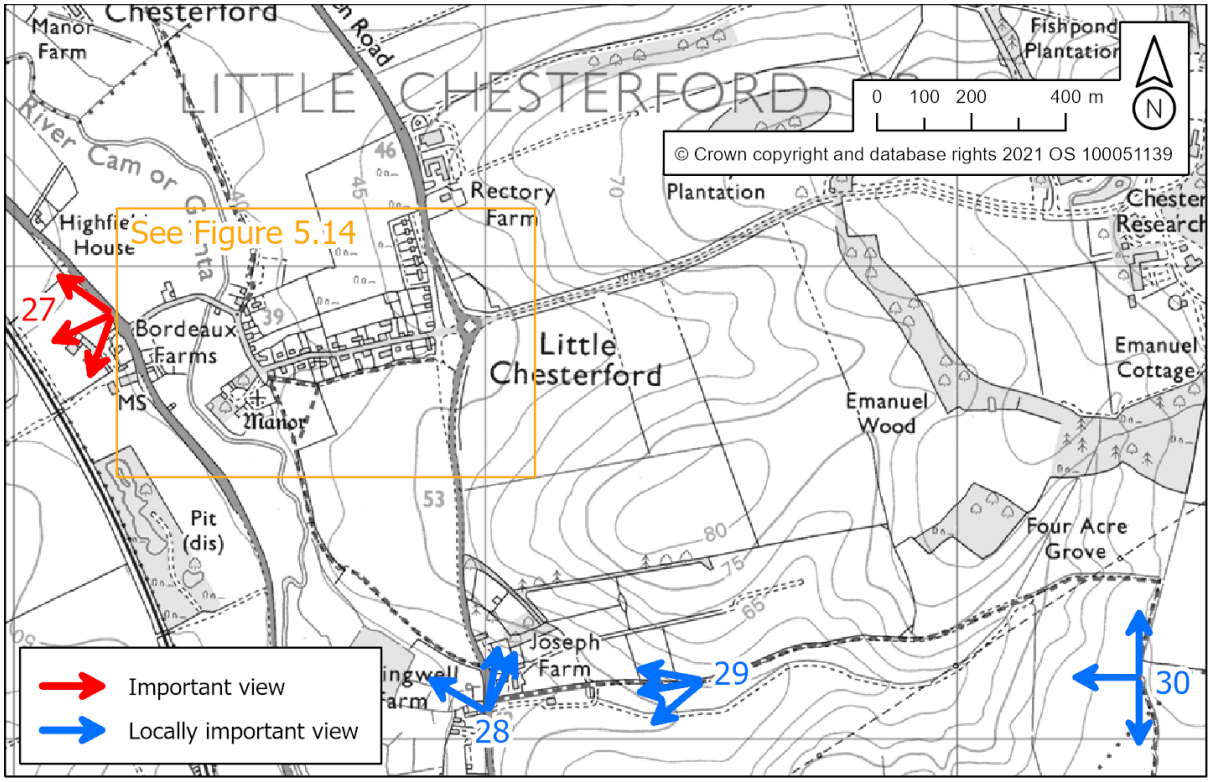

Figure 5.13 Little Chesterford Important and Locally Important Views – overview
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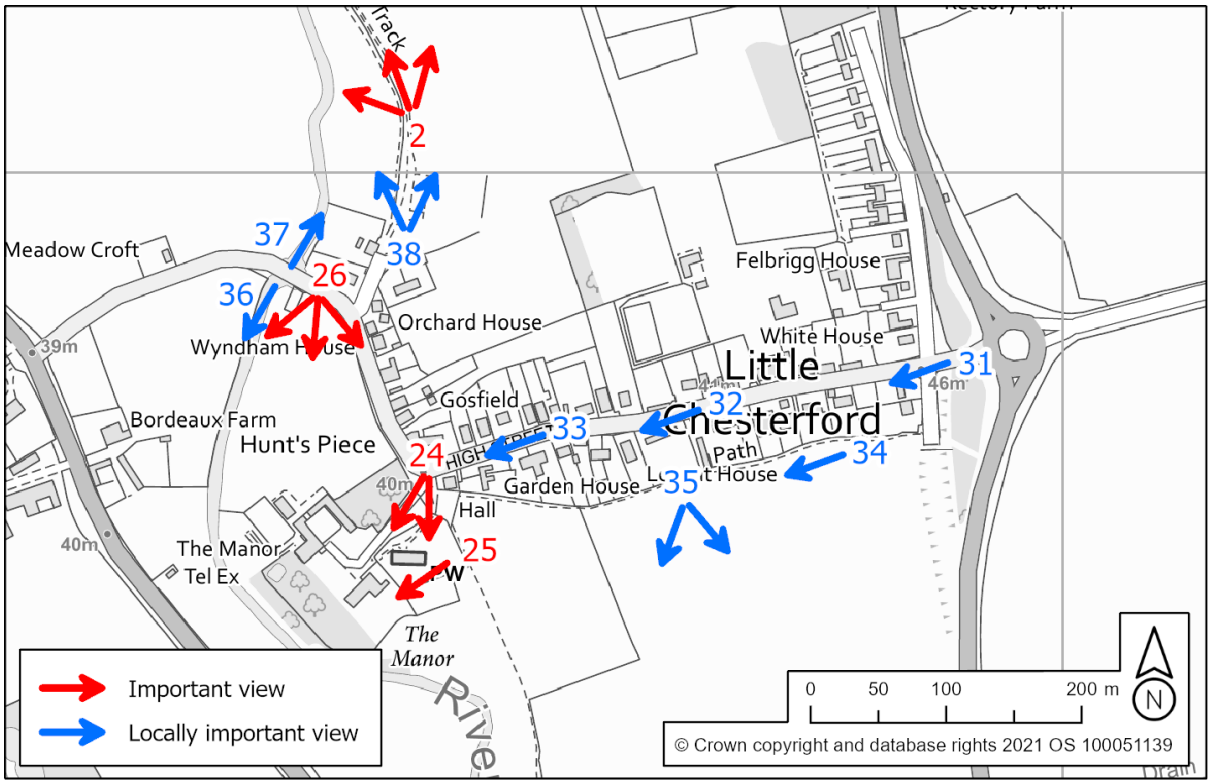

Figure 5.14 Little Chesterford Important and Locally Important Views – detailed inset
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version here]

Policy GLCNP/4b – Views

Development will be supported if:

a) It maintains or enhances and does not significantly adversely impact upon the Important Views or Locally Important Views;

b) The panoramic views to and from the Chesterford Ridge and Chalk Upper Slopes are maintained, including open views to and from Scheduled Monuments, historic buildings and landmarks such as churches.

5.5 Historic Environment

Policy Objective: To conserve and enhance the historic environment features of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

5.5.1 The historic environment of both Great and Little Chesterford is of national and local importance – it includes Scheduled Monuments, a plethora of heritage assets designated for protection by Historic England, historic cores in both villages and a host of historic features (see paragraphs 2.5–2.7, 2.17, 2.18, 2.20–2.26, 2.28 and 2.30).

5.5.2 The Local Heritage List for Uttlesford https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/local-heritage-list covers buildings, structures and sites that are not already listed by Historic England but are worth preserving because of their quality, style or historical importance. It comprises structures which are considered to be locally significant, and contribute to the unique character and distinctiveness of the area. There are 28 structures in Great Chesterford and 3 structures in Little Chesterford on UDC's Local Heritage List. Their inclusion ensures that any future planning proposals continue to conserve the special characteristics of the structure.

5.5.3 In Little Chesterford there are two particular Local Historic Features which are important and which do not have other forms of statutory protection and are therefore protected by this policy (see paragraphs 3.41 and 3.42):

5.5.4 (a) Flint and brick walls are a distinctive boundary treatment and a very important architectural feature of the village, constructed of flint panels supported by brick piers and capping. The use of this material reflects the local geology and historical availability of flints found in abundance on the fields surrounding the village and many are likely to have been built using materials from earlier structures, including the Roman walls themselves; and

5.5.5 (b) Sunken Banks running alongside the road are a historical and unique feature of the villages and they provide a buffer between roads and properties. They add to the character of the village and contribute to the historical charm and feel. Both Brick and Flint Walls and Sunken Banks in Little Chesterford will be protected.

5.5.6 In Great Chesterford, there are 273 Non-Designated Assets recorded on the Historic Environment Record, and 70 in Little Chesterford. These range in scale from cropmark complexes and Roman roads, down to sites of individual finds. They are widely distributed across the parish. Any development proposals will be expected to have particular regard to the heritage of the communities and be expected to be carried out in such a way in order to carefully identify any new Non-Designated Assets and treat them and existing Non-Designated Assets with appropriate sensitivity.

5.5.7 As described in the Historic Environment Assessment (2016), the Scheduled Monument that consists of a moated site, fishpond and enclosure at Bordeaux Farms is located to the rear of the current Bordeaux Farm in Little Chesterford. The current farm includes a grade II Listed 17th–18th century farmhouse, demonstrating a continuity of occupation and use of the farm since the medieval period. The agricultural setting, reflecting the Scheduled Monument's original land use, makes a major positive contribution significance of the moated site. This agricultural setting, visible from the Monument looking west over the Cam river valley, is bounded by consented and existing residential development, but is otherwise current and historic farmland. This Neighbourhood Plan endorses the Historic Environment Assessment's recommendation that *"The setting of the Bordeaux Farm Scheduled Site directly relates to the modern Bordeaux Farm and the*

immediate rural landscape. Development that does not relate directly to the agricultural role of the farm should be avoided in this area."

5.5.8 This Neighbourhood Plan endorses the historic environment findings of the Landscape Character Assessment of 2017. In particular, that:

"The majority of open spaces within the village of Great Chesterford lie within the Conservation Area, which is protected through national and local planning policy. Any proposed development would need to preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The river, public and private incidental open spaces and feature walls are an intrinsic part of the special character of the Conservation Area. As a result, the primary open spaces and routes are particularly sensitive to new development, and should be preserved." This similarly applies to the open spaces and routes to be found in and surrounding the historic core of Little Chesterford.

"Development proposed within the villages but outside the Great Chesterford Conservation Area would still need to consider the setting to the Conservation Area and the contribution that the proposals could make to the overall character of the villages."

5.5.9 This Neighbourhood Plan also endorses the recommendations of the Historic Environment Assessment of 2016, as set out in paragraph 3.47.

5.5.10 Historic Environment Features are shown in Figures 5.15 (Overview), 5.16 (Great Chesterford), 5.17 (Little Chesterford) and 5.18 (Scheduled Monuments).

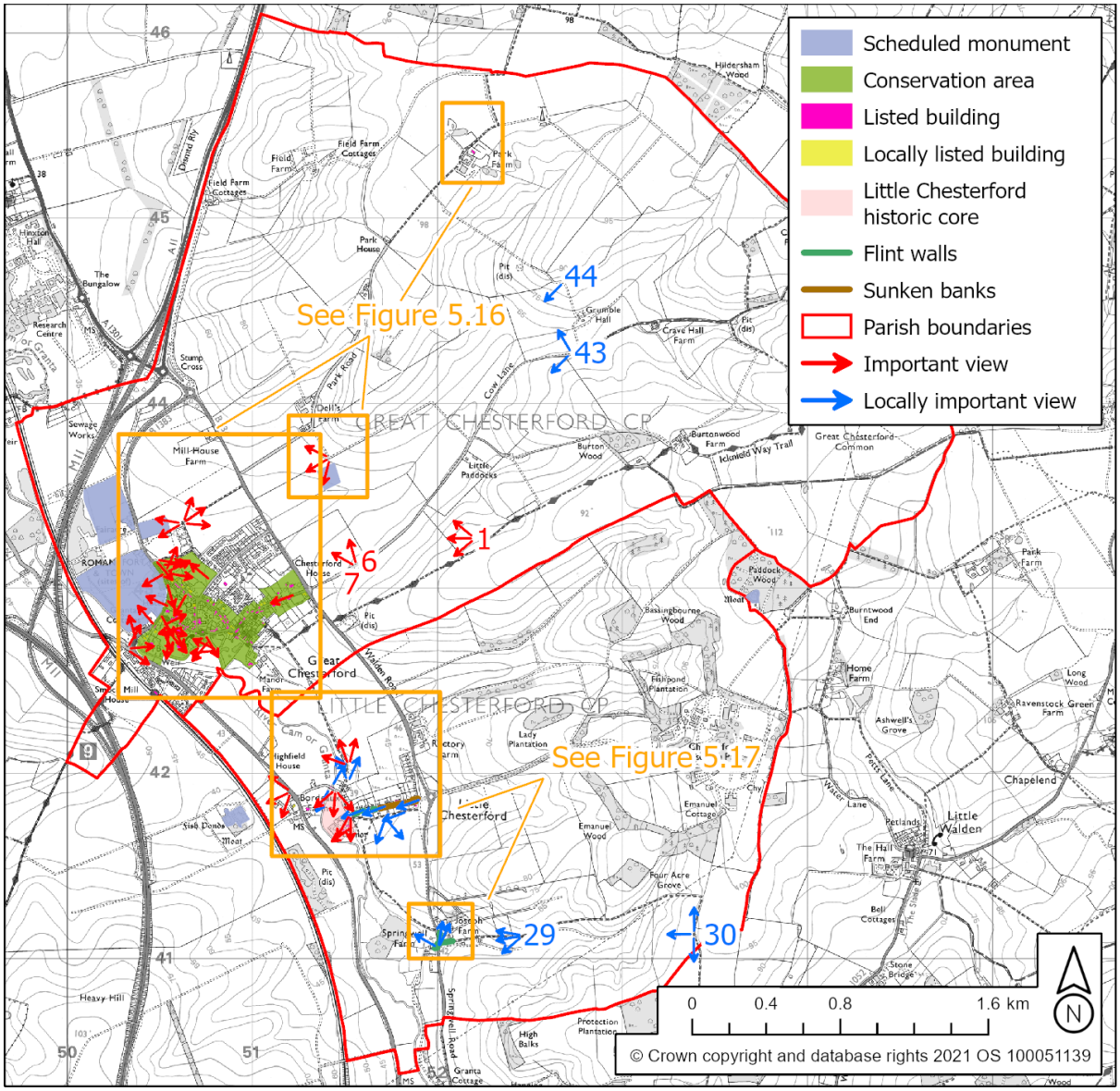

Figure 5.15 Overview of Historic Environment Features
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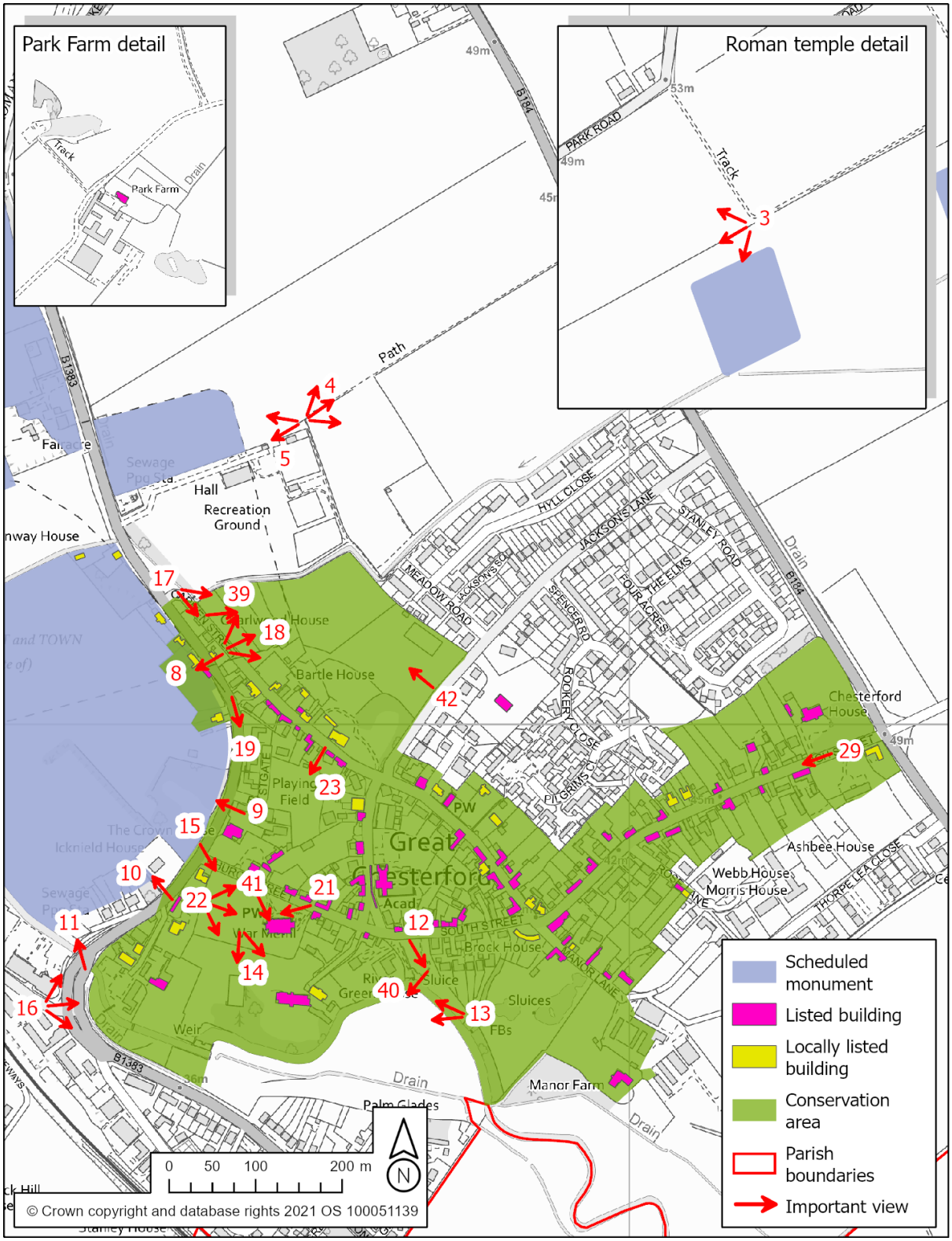

Figure 5.16 Great Chesterford Historic Environment Features
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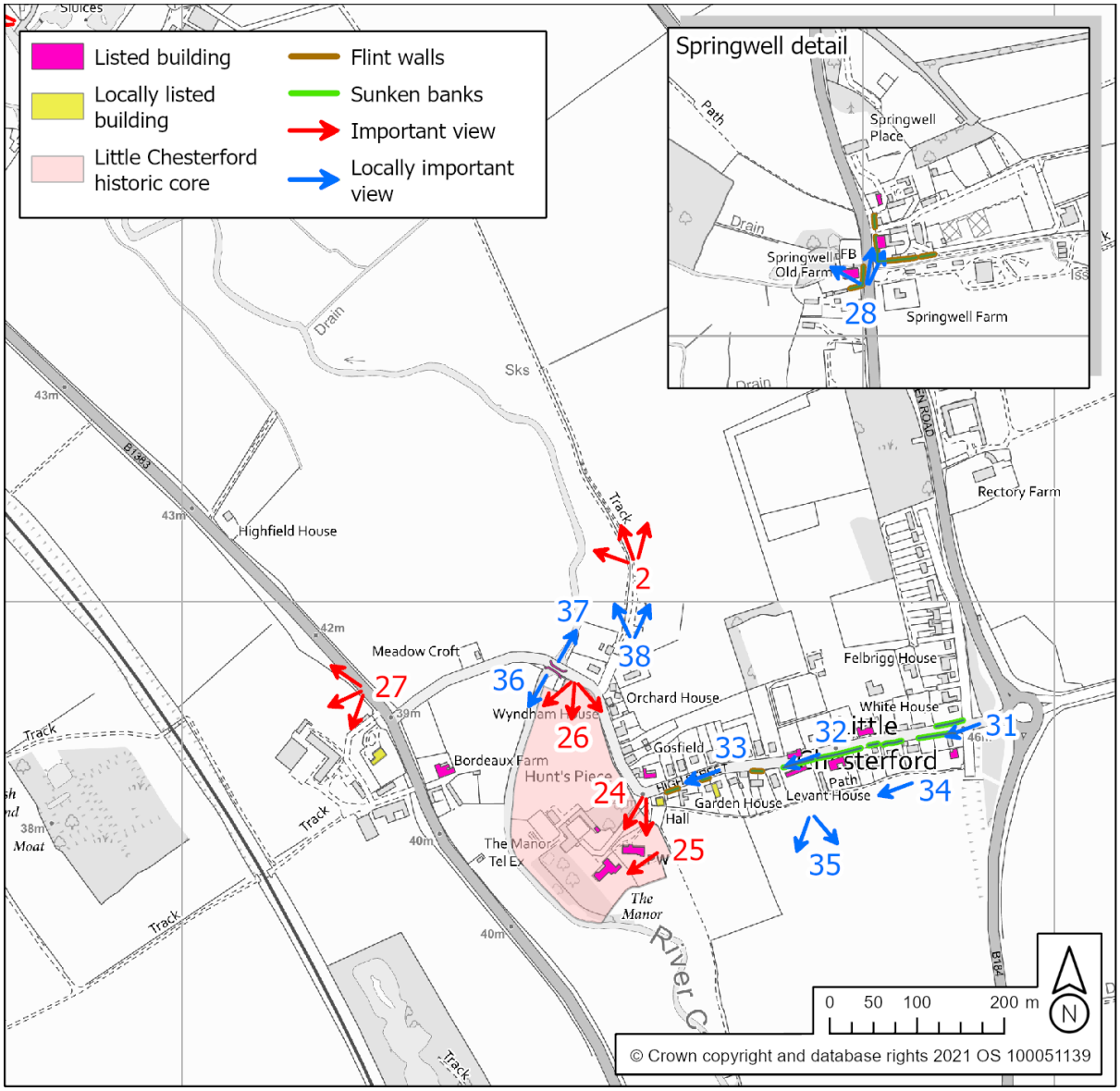

Figure 5.17 Little Chesterford Historic Environment Features
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Photo 12 – St Mary the Virgin Church, Little Chesterford

Photo 13 – All Saints Church, Great Chesterford

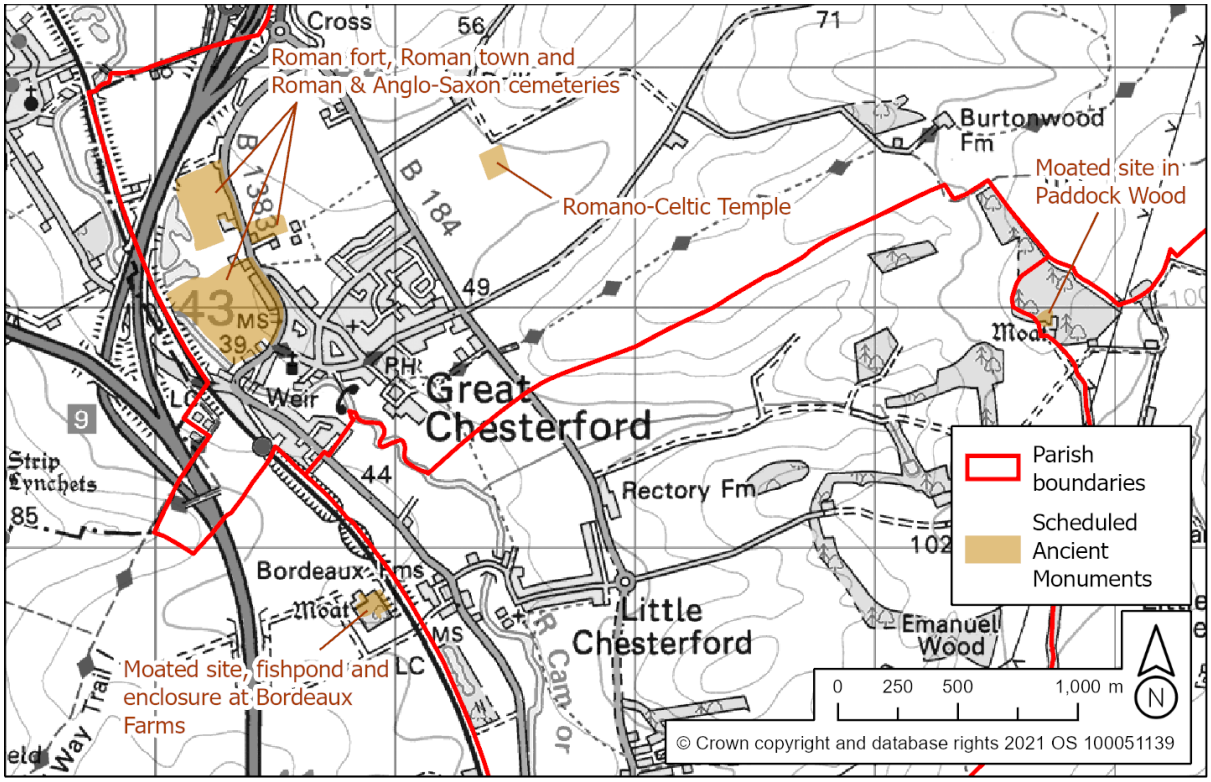

Figure 5.18 Scheduled Monuments
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Policy GLCNP/5 – Historic Environment

Development proposals should conserve and enhance the historic environment and take account of the following as appropriate:

1. The significance of any undesignated heritage asset, including any structure on the Local Heritage List;
2. Open visibility between the Scheduled Monuments comprising the Roman town and Fort, and the Romano-Celtic Temple and the open aspect of the Romano-Celtic Temple area should both be conserved;
3. Development along Newmarket Road should avoid any significant detrimental impact on views into the designated Scheduled Monuments;
4. The setting of the Bordeaux Farm Scheduled Monument (Figure 5.17) should be conserved;
5. In Little Chesterford, the Historic Core (Figure 5.17) comprising the open space and setting of the Church and Hall should be conserved;
6. The Local Historic Features (flint walls and sunken banks) in Little Chesterford should be conserved or enhanced by any development proposals;
7. The publication and dissemination of the results of archaeological investigations is encouraged where these are required to be undertaken; and
8. The contribution of a high quality of design and materials.

5.6 Valued Community Spaces and Facilities

Policy Objective: To maintain and enhance community spaces that are valued for recreation, education and/or services (including designated Local Green Spaces) which make a significant positive contribution to the well-being and quality of life of residents and the aesthetic quality of the Plan area.

5.6.1 The Neighbourhood Plan has identified through the consultation documents and other evidence a list of places and assets within the community which need to have protection afforded to them for the benefit of the community, whether that is by virtue of community use, visual or spatial amenity or value through its beauty and tranquillity.

5.6.2 This policy makes specific reference to the documents: Landscape Character Assessment 2017, Historic Environment Assessment 2016, Conservation Area Appraisal 2007, Little Chesterford Village Survey 2016, The Great Chesterford Village Plan 2015 and the Great Chesterford Primary Academy Survey 2019.

5.6.3 The Landscape Character Assessment identifies and categorises the open spaces within the villages in order to assess the contribution that the open spaces make to the landscapes of both villages. The Historic Environment Assessment details the historic significance of numerous locations within both villages, explaining their significance and contribution to the setting. The Conservation Area Appraisal refers specifically to Great Chesterford and identifies features that both contribute to and detract from the character of the village, providing management proposals accordingly. Finally, the Little Chesterford Village Survey 2016, The Great Chesterford Village Plan 2015, and the Great Chesterford Primary Academy Survey 2019 have helped to inform decisions by deepening understanding of the views of residents from both villages.

5.6.4 Retaining and improving village amenities is a key issue of concern to residents. In the Village Survey 2016, the residents of Little Chesterford identified the community spirit and nature of a small village, together with the open rural countryside and peace and quiet, as the key features that make the village a great place to live.

5.6.5 Similarly, the Great Chesterford Village Plan 2015 listed the surrounding countryside, transport links and the attractiveness of the village as the most important reasons for living in Great Chesterford, but quality of the environment for raising children, sense of community, and proximity to nearby relations were also popular reasons for living in the village.

5.6.6 In their survey of 2019, the children of Great Chesterford Primary Academy rated the recreation ground and skate park; the friendly, community feel; the school; the river, trees and wildlife; and the shop as the top five things they valued about living in the Chesterfords.

5.6.7 Great Chesterford is generally considered well served in terms of facilities. The facilities identified by the community as the most valued are the local pubs, GP surgeries, village shop and The Chesterfords Community Centre. The community centre is home to both the much-loved Chesterfords Preschool and highly-valued after-school club, as well as hosting many village activities such as Parish Council meetings, Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, craft workshops, karate, Pilates, bounce

classes, dance classes and Saffron Walden Dance Band. Furthermore, the Crown House Hotel and church were also identified as key facilities within the village.

The smaller settlement of Little Chesterford has fewer facilities, but the Village Hall and adjoining meadow are highly valued for community activities, with 92% of residents identifying an interest in these community events. The activities that take place currently and through its varied history include an Infants/Sunday School, the first Women's Institute in the area in the 1920s, and in the present day the annual village fete, village social events from birthday parties to funeral teas, art clubs to band practice as well as Parish Council meetings.

5.6.8 In addition to the facilities outlined above, Great Chesterford Church of England Primary Academy is a highly valued part of the community, serving both Great and Little Chesterford. 76.3% of residents of Great Chesterford identified it as the 'heart of the village' and an important amenity to be protected by the plan. The residents of Little Chesterford highly value the ability to send their children to Great Chesterford Primary Academy with 82% of respondents rating it as 'very important'. Great Chesterford Primary Academy serves the children of the whole Plan area and is valued not only for the excellent education that it provides but in its role in promoting community interaction and cohesiveness. Its location at the heart of the village of Great Chesterford is seen by many to be a key part of this role. The school has an approximate capacity of 210 pupils and the current site constrains further expansion.

5.6.9 Recreational facilities within the village of Great Chesterford are a key source of local entertainment, for young residents in particular. These play areas and community facilities were identified for not only their aesthetics but their ability to foster a sense of community amongst users. The survey showed that, in particular, Horse River Green, the recreation ground playground and The Chesterfords Community Centre were heavily used by villagers, with over 100 respondents willing to volunteer to maintain these spaces. In addition, the Youth Questionnaire within the Great Chesterford Village Plan highlighted that visiting the recreation ground, play areas and engaging in sport were all popular. In Little Chesterford, recreational activities centre around the village hall, meadow and church.

5.6.10 Green spaces within both villages provide space for the community to perform recreational activities whilst also maintaining the character of the village. The green spaces identified below are deemed to be of particular value to the community; their functions include recreation, aesthetics, green infrastructure and protection of the separation zone.

5.6.11 Many residents regularly make use of community routes that link public rights of way with the kind permission of local landowners. A route between Park Lane and Cow Lane adjoining the site of the Roman Temple allows appreciation of the setting of the historic asset. A route joining Grumble Hall to Park Farm provides extensive views from the chalk uplands across the Cam Valley. A route along the River Cam between Great and Little Chesterford provides access to riverside tranquillity, beauty and wildlife through a short circuit linking with the public footpath.

Table 5.2

Valued Community Spaces and Facilities	
Recreational Facilities (places regularly visited) 1. Hall Gardens (recently reduced in size) 2. Pilgrim Close Hardstanding Open Spaces 3. Saffron Walden Angling Club Bordeaux Pit (main pit and small pit) 4. Chesterford Fisheries **Local Services** 5. The village shop on School Street 6. GP surgery on School Street 7. GP surgery on High Street 8. Great Chesterford railway station 9. The Plough PH 10. The Crown and Thistle PH 11. The Crown House Hotel 12. Fitness gym at Chesterford Research Park	**Community Services** 13. All Saints Church 14. St Mary the Virgin Church 15. Congregational Chapel 16. The Chesterfords Community Centre 17. Little Chesterford Village Hall 18. Telephone box on Horse River Green **Educational Facilities** 19. Great Chesterford C of E Primary Academy **Community Routes (used by residents for recreational purposes with the kind permission of the landowners)** 20. Park Road to Cow Lane (via the Roman temple site 21. Grumble Hall to Park Farm 22. Riverside walk between Great and Little Chesterford

Photo 14 – Horse River Green

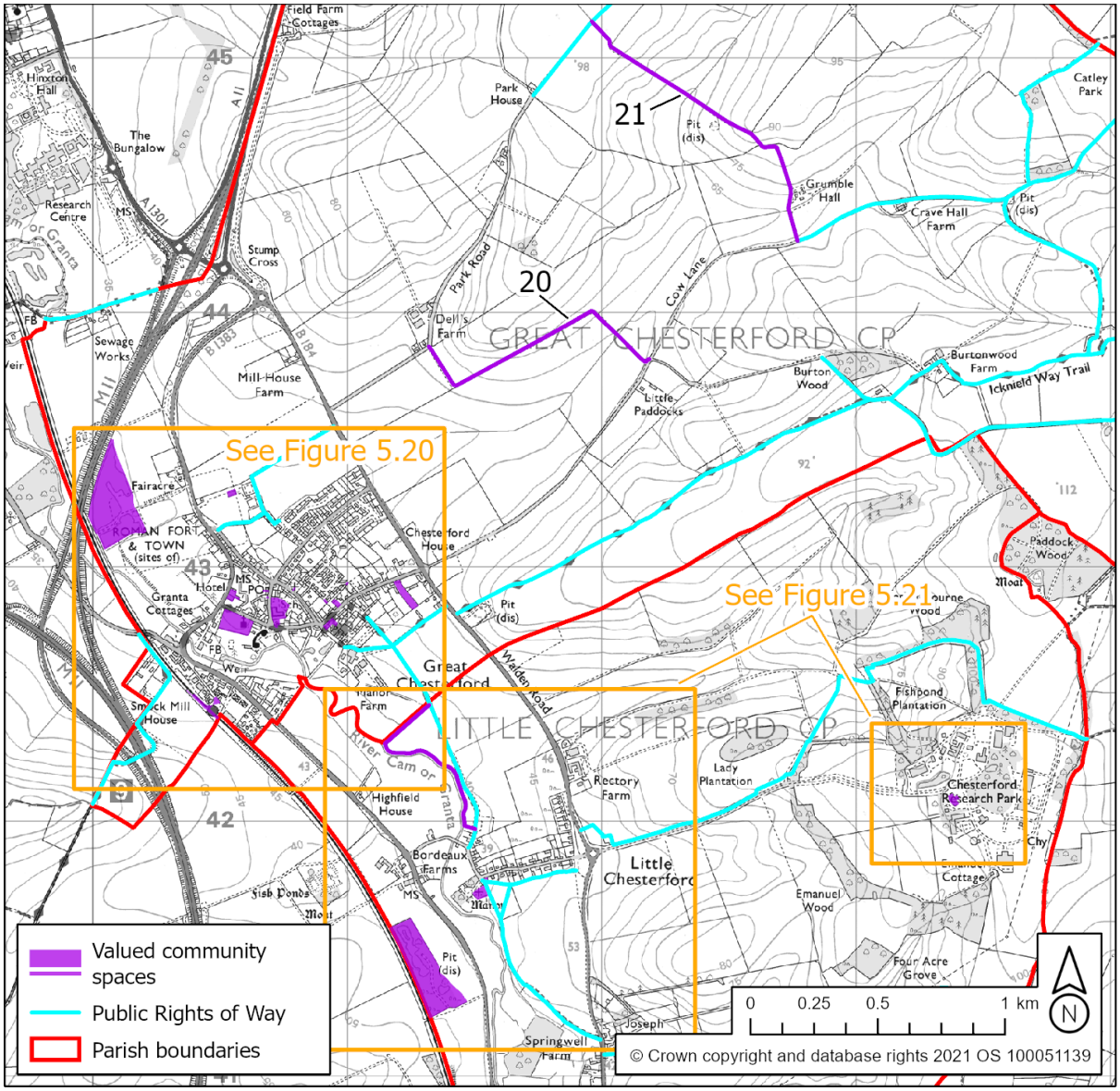

Figure 5.19 Valued Community Spaces and Facilities – overview
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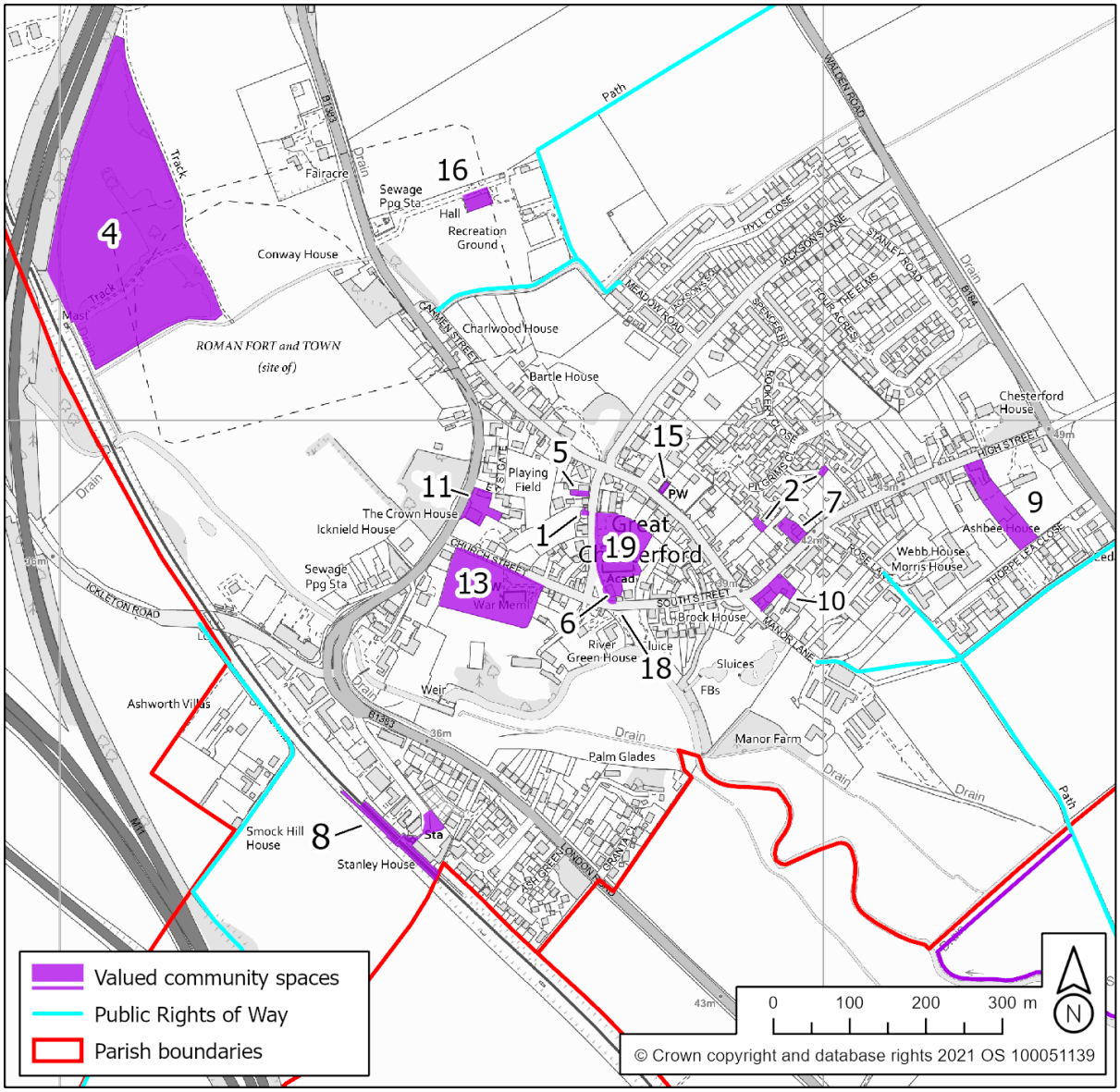

Figure 5.20 Valued Community Spaces and Facilities – Great Chesterford
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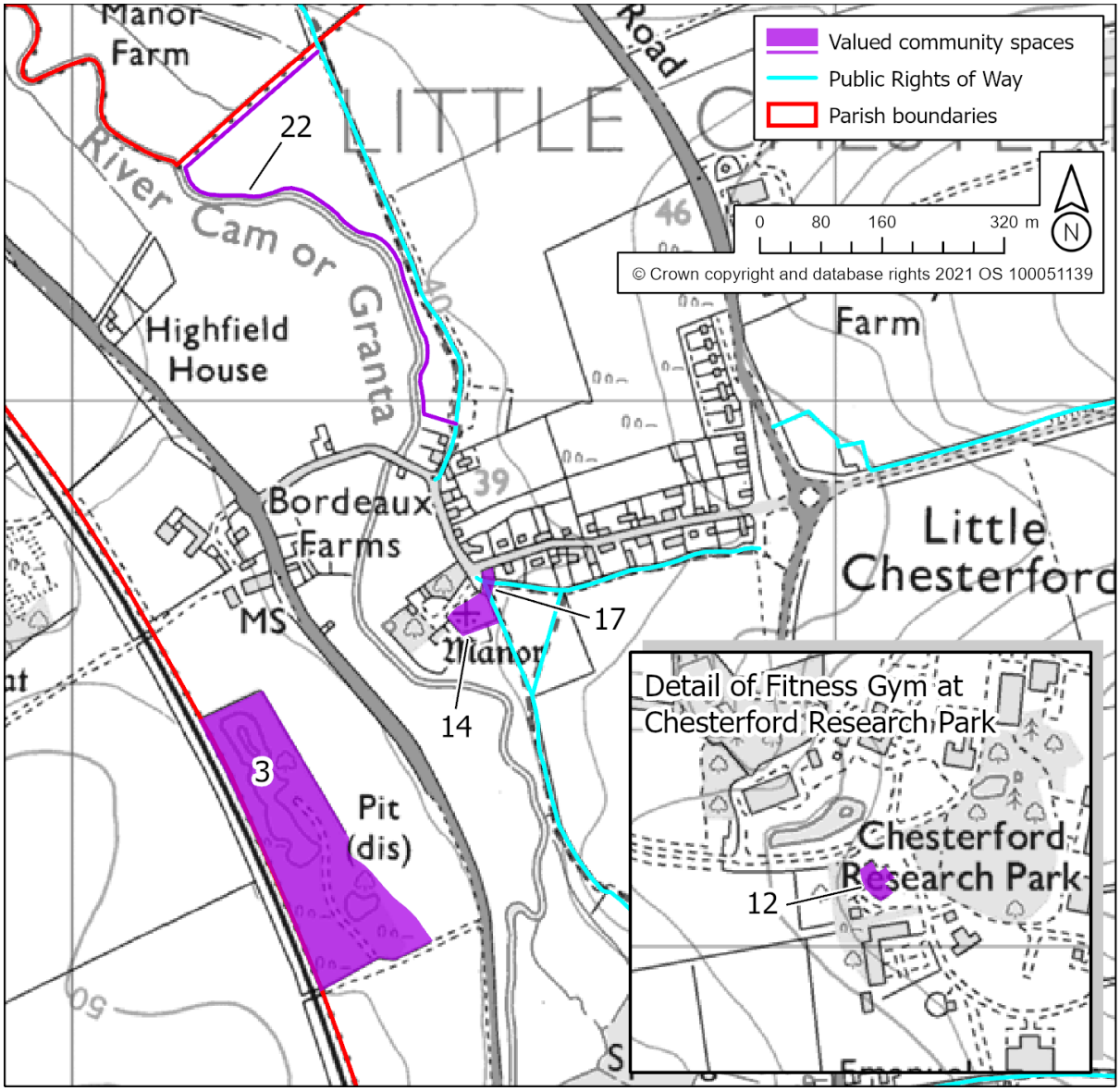

Figure 5.21 Valued Community Spaces and Facilities – Little Chesterford
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version here]

Policy GLCNP/6 – Valued Community Spaces and Facilities

Development proposals which result in the loss or significant reduction in the value of Valued Community Spaces and Facilities (Table 5.2) should demonstrate that either the space or facility is no longer required or that alternative appropriate provision of at least equivalent value exists or will be provided elsewhere in an appropriate location in the neighbourhood area.

5.7 Local Green Spaces

Policy Objective: To protect and enhance local green spaces of value to the local communities

5.7.1 At present, the parishes have a number of green spaces. Paragraph 101 of the NPPF states that particular sites in and around Great and Little Chesterford can be protected through a Local Green Space designation so that their value to the parish and surrounding area is preserved. Paragraph 102 states that for Neighbourhood Plans to designate certain areas as Local Green Space they should:

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

5.7.2 The designation of Local Green Space affords the area additional protection from development.

5.7.3 A Local Green Space Assessment has been undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Group that demonstrates how these identified green spaces qualify when compared to the required criteria. This assessment is available to view as a supporting document.

5.7.4 The sites listed in Table 5.3 and shown in Figure 5.22 were identified through a variety of assessments, including the UDC Great Chesterford Conservation Area Appraisal 2007; Landscape Character Assessment 2017; and Local Wildlife sites and Historic Environment Assessment 2016. Additionally, local residents nominated sites they deemed to be of significant local importance.

Table 5.3

Site Reference	Site name	Grid reference
LGS-1	Recreation Ground – Great Chesterford	TL 50517 43221
LGS-2	Allotments, orchard, nursery field – Great Chesterford	TL 50599 43255
LGS-3	Jubilee Gardens – Great Chesterford	TL 50466 43161 & TL 50479 43138
LGS-4	Horse field parallel to Carmen Street and on Jacksons Lane – Great Chesterford	TL 50651 43096
LGS-5	Academy playing field – Great Chesterford	TL 50615 42919
LGS-6	Coronation Green – Great Chesterford	TL 50703 42775
LGS-7	Horse River Green – Great Chesterford	TL 50755 42725
LGS-8	Congregational Chapel garden – Great Chesterford	TL 50801 42904
LGS-9	Pilgrim Close open space – Great Chesterford	TL 50887 42947

LGS-10	Rookery Close open space – Great Chesterford	TL 50948 42996
LGS-11	Stanley Road play area – Great Chesterford	TL 51185 43086
LGS-12	Thorpe Lea open space – Great Chesterford	TL 51275 42801
LGS-14	Ash Green open space – Great Chesterford	TL 50670 42402
LGS-15	Green by Manor Cottages – Little Chesterford	TL 51506 41933
LGS-16	Meadow behind Little Chesterford Village Hall – Little Chesterford	TL 51613 41697
LGS-17	Grassed area adjacent to B184 – Little Chesterford	TL 51927 41778

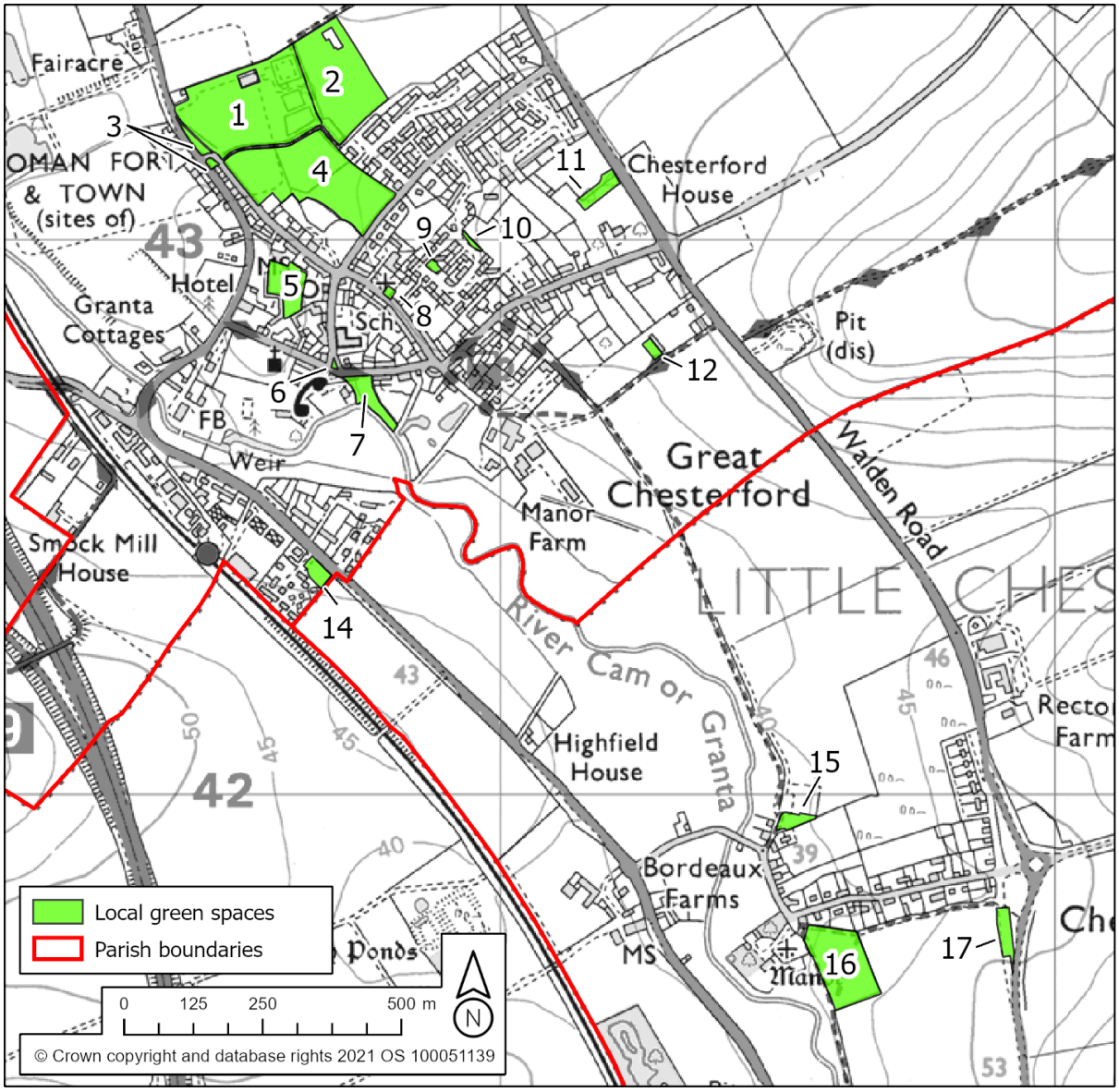

Figure 5.22 Local Green Spaces
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version here]

Policy GLCNP/7 – Local Green Spaces

The sites as shown in Table 5.3 and Figure 5.22 are designated as Local Green Spaces.

Photo 15 – The Cam at Horse River Green

5.8 Employment

Policy Objective: To promote sustainable economic development and local business within the Neighbourhood Plan Area through the protection and improvement of jobs and employment areas for employment use, providing employment to both local people and those who commute into the area, whilst protecting and enhancing the rural and village environments and sustainable travel.

5.8.1 There are a number of businesses in the Neighbourhood Plan Area and these are important to the local economy. National and local planning policy recognises the need to support appropriate economic growth in rural areas and this is also a key aspiration of the community in Great and Little Chesterford.

5.8.2 This policy protects the existing vibrancy of the parishes by recognising the important contribution made by local businesses. Those who work in Great and Little Chesterford include residents and those who commute into the area.

5.8.3 Employment is important to securing a sound economic future for the plan area. Existing employment sites will be protected and supported by the Neighbourhood Plan.

5.8.4 Key employers within Great and Little Chesterford are focused on seven sites. In Great Chesterford the employment sites are Station Approach, Plextek single occupier site, Park Farm (which comprises two separate sites), and Cam Valley Crematorium (see Figure 5.23). In Little Chesterford, the employment sites are Rectory Farm Barns, Chesterford Research Park and Springwell Nursery and Garden Centre (see Figure 5.24). The functions of these businesses vary, creating a diverse pool of employers providing a range of employment opportunities across various sectors.

5.8.5 Chesterford Research Park (CRP) is the largest employer in the Plan area, and indeed one of the largest in the wider district of Uttlesford. Set in 250 acres of parkland to the east of Little Chesterford village, it comprises high quality biotechnology, pharmaceutical and technology R&D companies (see Figure 5.24). CRP is committed to sustainable transport policies in order to reduce road and parking congestion. They offer a daily coach service to and from two central Cambridge locations, as well as a shuttle bus service to and from Great Chesterford railway station. They work closely with Little Chesterford Parish Council in a bid to be a good neighbour in the local community, and encourage those working at the Park to avoid ‘rat running’ through Little Chesterford. This policy seeks to preserve and enhance this.

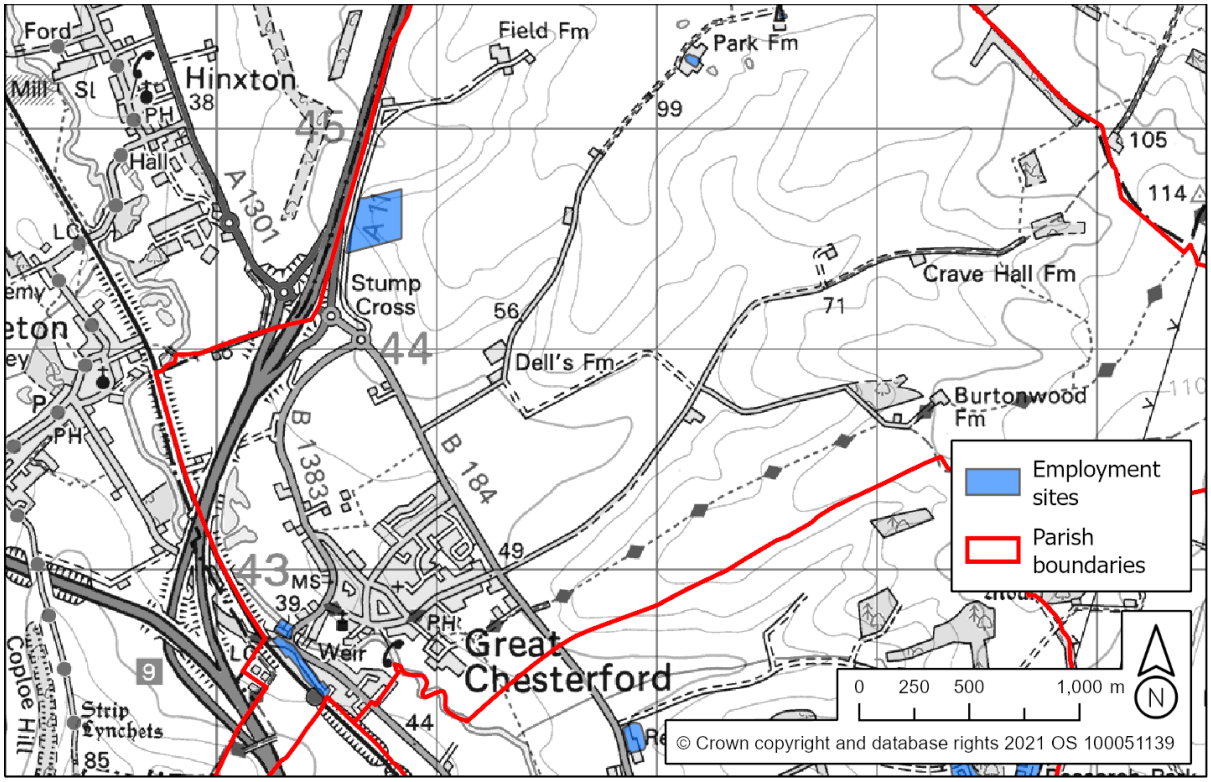

Figure 5.23 Great Chesterford employment sites
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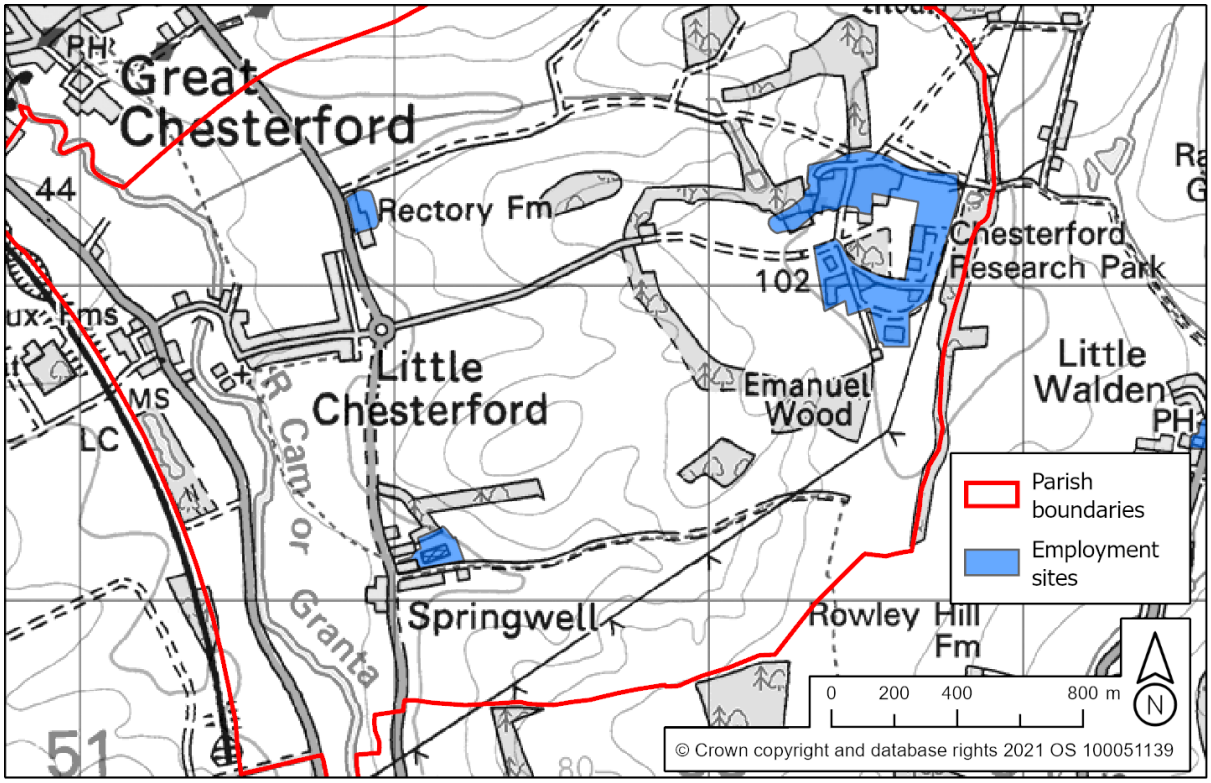

Figure 5.24 Little Chesterford employment sites
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version here]

Policy GLCNP/8 – Employment

1. Proposals for new employment development will be supported at the existing employment sites identified in Figures 5.23 and 5.24, and where necessary (to deliver sustainable development directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development) off-site contributions are secured towards initiatives that minimise resulting through traffic in the villages.

2. Proposed developments at Chesterford Research Park will be supported where they are for research and development (and ancillary) uses, are not within the Chesterford Research Park Separation Zone (see Figure 5.4), and are subject to the provision of a workplace travel plan which takes into account the need to minimise through traffic in the villages where appropriate.

3. Proposed development that has a significant detrimental impact on sites of employment identified in Figures 5.23 and 5.24, including causing their loss or reduction, should demonstrate that the relevant business is not viable in that location and redevelopment or an alternative use is the only realistic proposal.

5.9 Housing

Policy Objective: To ensure the protection and improvement of existing housing stock for residents and identify land for proportionate growth of residential properties.

5.9.1 The Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan has been produced in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Uttlesford Local Plan. In accordance with national Guidance and Policy, it is essential that our housing supply policy contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.

5.9.2 We have been working collaboratively with Uttlesford District Council to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan Policies are complementary to those within the Local Plan. Any strategic policies should set out a housing requirement figure for designated neighbourhood areas from their overall housing requirement. Development coming forward over the Great and Little Chesterford Plan Period must be sustainable.

5.9.3 Housing need and in particular affordable housing is not considered to be an issue that has come up during consultation to the extent that it requires a specific approach to be taken in the Neighbourhood Plan over and above that set out in the Local Plan. Information has been taken from our consultation responses, housing needs survey and the Census as well as recent developments in the village of Great Chesterford having a very limited local take-up of affordable housing, and reverting instead to tenants and purchasers from the wider Uttlesford area. We do, however, value the opportunity that this can afford to local people and recognise that some in the villages do still hold affordable housing as a significant issue for them. As at 8 November 2021, UDC have confirmed that there are 19 applicants on the housing register with a local connection to Great Chesterford, and a further 4 applicants with a local connection to Little Chesterford. The breakdown of bedroom needs is:

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
Great Chesterford	9	8	0	1
Little Chesterford	2	2	0	0

(One applicant in Great Chesterford has not yet had bedroom need calculated.)

5.9.4 However, growth in both villages over the Neighbourhood Plan period must be sufficient to maintain healthy communities but not be too much to significantly alter the feel of these communities.

5.9.5 From 2011–2019, there had been a growth of 22.83% in the Plan area, which has made a very significant contribution to the housing requirement for the local area, and is significantly more than in previous years. Growth at this rate, with no associated development of infrastructure such as increase in primary school capacity, is not sustainable and consultation with residents supports this view. Additionally, Essex County Council have noted that “Great Chesterford Church of England Primary Academy is full in most year groups and accommodating pupils from new housing may prove problematic in some cohorts.”

5.9.6 Taking all this into account, we have therefore determined that approximately 10% growth over the Plan Period (from the baseline of 783 dwellings in Great Chesterford and 94 in Little Chesterford) for each settlement is sufficient, but also desirable, achievable, deliverable and importantly sustainable. In addition, in response to the Neighbourhood Planning body's request pursuant to paragraph 67 of the NPPF, UDC has confirmed in writing that "the Council currently considers that the indicative housing requirement for the neighbourhood area of Great and Little Chesterford is 96 dwellings between 2019 and 2033."

5.9.7 In order to allocate housing sites to enable this growth, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering group carried out a two-step process of Neighbourhood Plan Housing Land Assessment (NPHLA) and Neighbourhood Plan Housing Site Selection (NPHSS).

5.9.8 The Neighbourhood Plan Housing Land Assessment (NPHLA) assessed all known available sites for their suitability and deliverability. Sites were only considered where they had the potential to deliver at least five dwellings. Sites smaller than this did not form part of the Neighbourhood Plan Housing Land Assessment. Any such sites, when they come forward, will be considered as a planning application against current policy, including those policies adopted as part of the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan. Sites which have been fully developed since Uttlesford's site assessment work were removed from the assessment. Sites relating to the North Uttlesford Garden Village draft allocation were also removed from consideration as this was a strategic proposal not appropriate to be addressed through a Neighbourhood Plan Housing Assessment. Additionally, the UDC Local Plan containing this draft allocation had been withdrawn.

5.9.9 The NPHLA report explains the methodology of the Steering Group for assessing sites, provides individual site assessments for those sites considered by the Steering Group, and gives a summary of conclusions based on these assessments. After a period of consultation with stakeholders, including landowners and Uttlesford District Council, a final version of this assessment was made available in July 2020. The outcome of the assessment is summarised in Figure 5.25.

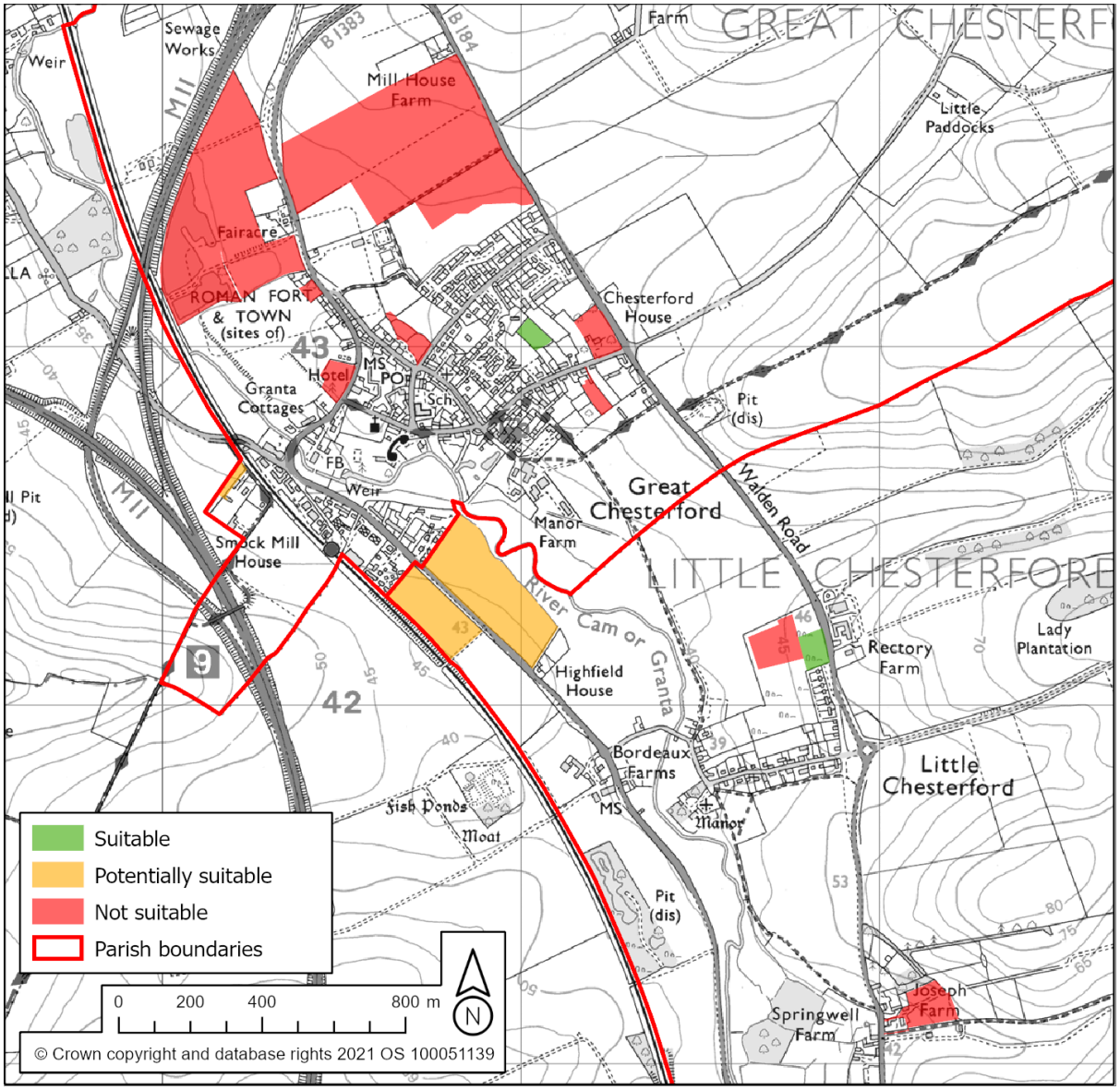

Figure 5.25 Summary outcome from Neighbourhood Plan Housing Land Assessment
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version here]

5.9.10 The Neighbourhood Plan Housing Sites Selection (NPHSS) assessed housing land previously demonstrated through the NPHLA as potentially suitable, available and achievable, against the vision and objectives of the plan.

5.9.11 A final version of the NPHSS, including a summary of the sites selected for allocation for housing development, was made available in March 2021 after a period of consultation with stakeholders, including landowners and Uttlesford District Council. The report explains the methodology of the Steering Group for assessing housing sites for selection, provides individual site assessments against the vision and objectives of the plan, and gives a summary of conclusions based on these assessments. [The Neighbourhood Plan Housing Sites Selection report is available as a supporting document.]

5.9.12 The NPHSS selected three sites for housing development as shown in Figure 5.26:

- Land Opposite Rectory Barns (Chest 12)
- Land North of Bartholomew Close (Chest 13)
- Land South-West of London Road (Chest 9).

(Taken together these sites deliver 99 homes and 11.29% growth over the plan period, which is in accordance with 5.9.6 above.)

5.9.13 Overall development (excluding 'windfall' which are not specifically covered by this Policy GLCNP/9 – see 5.9.8 – but nevertheless will still be subject to all the other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan) during the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan period is planned for 12% of the number of dwellings in the Neighbourhood Plan Area (from the 2019 baseline of 877 dwellings). This is in line with the housing requirement as set out by Uttlesford District Council but also accords with our Vision and Objectives as being a sustainable level of growth for our communities.

5.9.14 Subsequent to the selection of sites Chest 13 and Chest 9 through the NPHSS, these sites were granted planning permission for 13 and 76 dwellings respectively and construction has started. These sites continue to contribute to the overall housing requirement for the plan area.

Chest 13, Land North of Bartholomew Close: Consent was granted on 11 May 2020 for up to 13 dwellings [UTT/19/2288/FUL]. Construction began on 28 May 2021.

Chest 9, Land to the South-West of London Road: Outline planning consent was granted 17 June 2020 for 76 dwellings [UTT/19/0573/OP]. Reserved matters were approved 21 February 2022 [UTT/20/3329/DFO] and construction began on 21 March 2022.

These two sites together will therefore provide 89 dwellings, which represents growth of 10% and ensures delivery of 89% of the indicative housing requirement for the plan period.

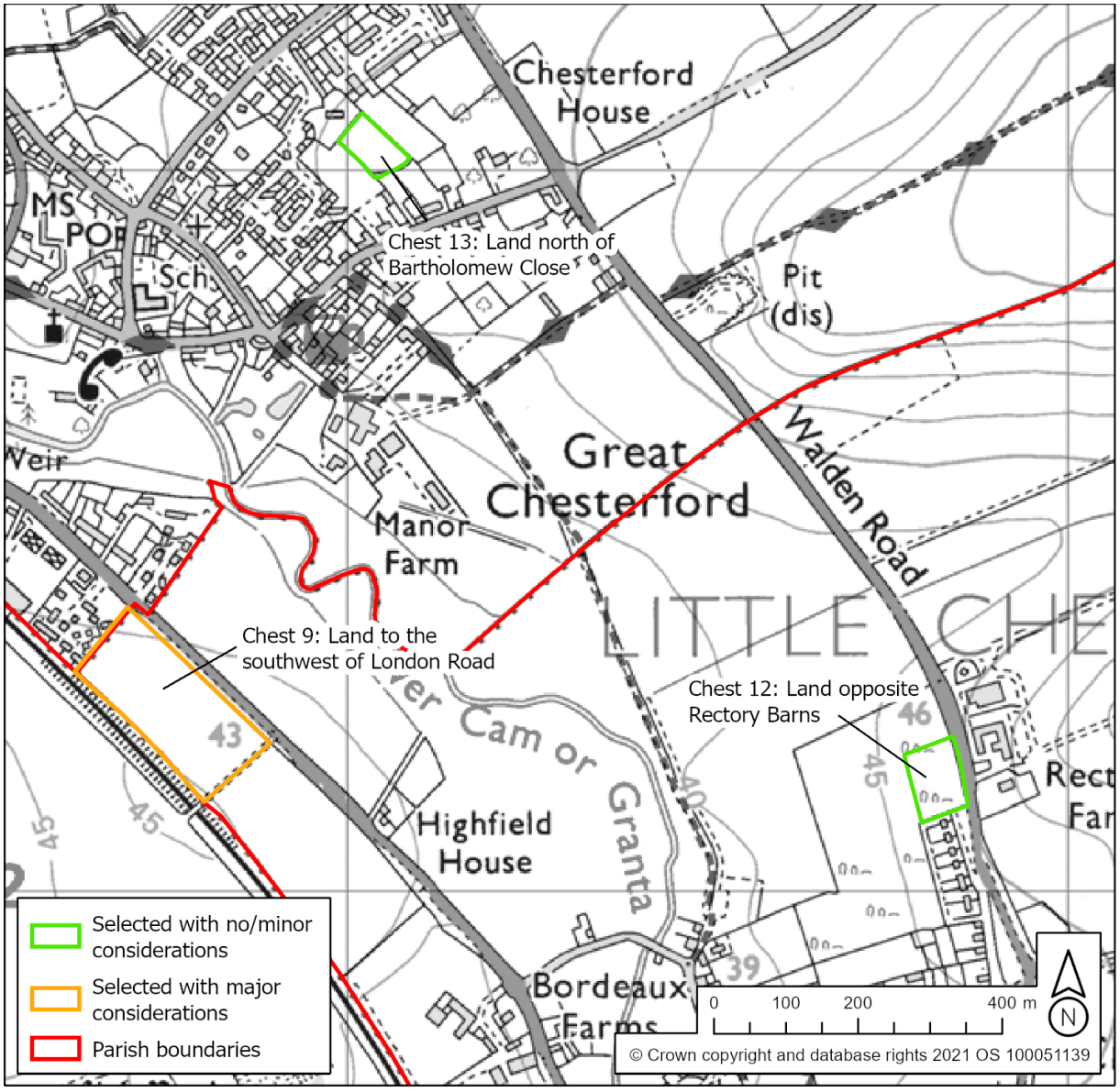

Figure 5.26 Summary outcome from Neighbourhood Plan Site Selection
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version here]

Policy GLCNP/9 – Housing

Residential development proposals will be supported which are located on:

- site allocation Chest 12 and are in accordance with Policy GLCNP/9.1
- windfall sites of fewer than five units; or
- infill sites or previously developed land

and which address the following considerations:

- a scale of development which is proportionate to the size of the settlement in which it is located;
- provision of a mix of sizes and tenures of homes which reflects local needs;
- provision of specialist housing for older people where appropriate;
- provision of affordable homes which meet local housing needs as expressed in the local housing needs assessment; and
- securing contributions for the Early Years and Child Care education facility to the east of the Bowls Club in Great Chesterford where this relates appropriately to the proposed development.

Land Opposite Rectory Barns (Chest 12)

5.9.15 Land Opposite Rectory Barns (Chest 12): The site is suitable and development of the site is achievable. Access is possible from the B184 or Walden Road. This site provides proportionate growth and there are opportunities to preserve and enhance green landscape features. Development should preserve the settlement pattern and green screening surrounding the site. This would enhance the northern gateway to the village from the B184 when leaving the settlement separation zone as the brow of the hill is reached. There is the opportunity to provide enhanced recreational facilities; for example, a children's playground. Other opportunities for enhancement of amenities have not been identified given the size of the site. Safe pedestrian access via the Walden Road or B184 should be provided.

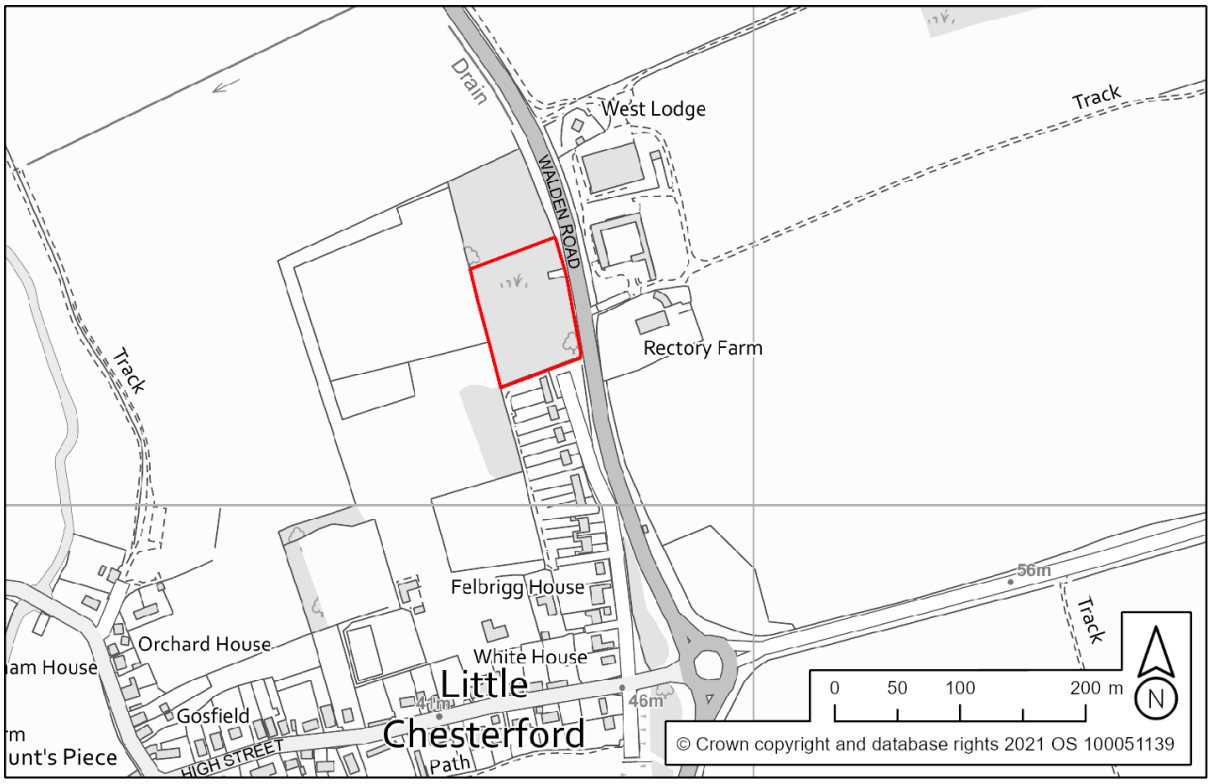

Figure 5.27 Location of Land opposite Rectory Barns

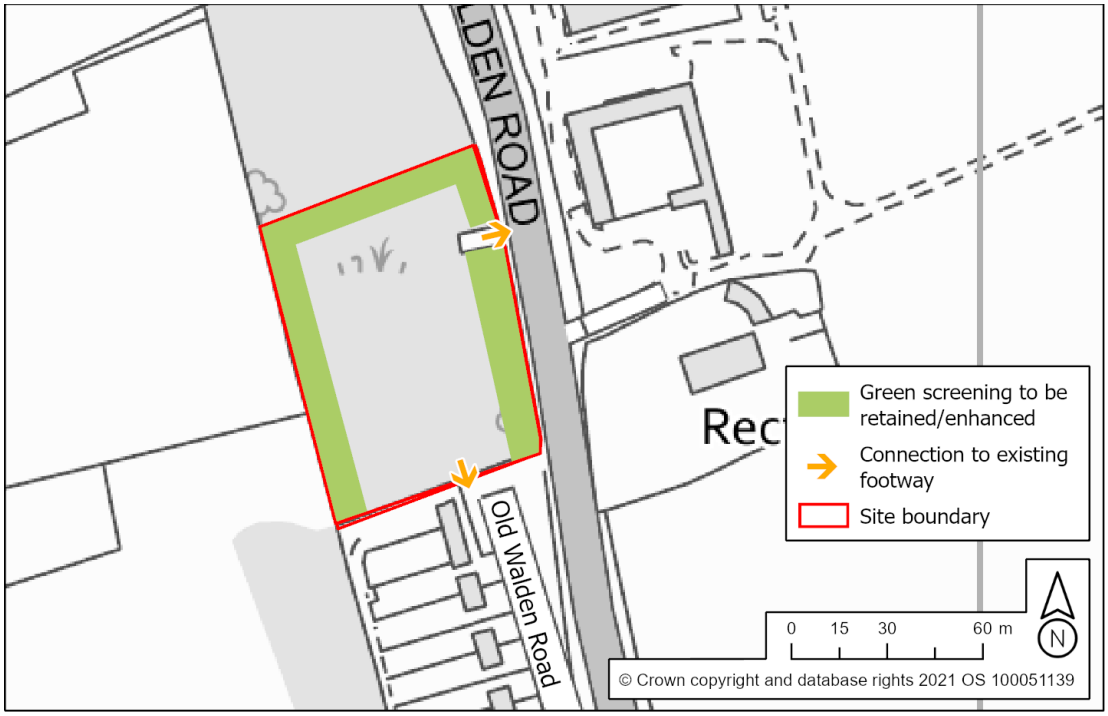

Figure 5.28 Access and green screening for Land Opposite Rectory Barns

POLICY GLCNP/9.1 – Land Opposite Rectory Barns (Chest 12)

Proposals for up to 10 dwellings at Land Opposite Rectory Barns as identified in Figure 5.27 will be supported.

Development proposals should incorporate the following principles:

1. The built form should continue the linear form of the existing dwellings along the Old Walden Road, Little Chesterford.
2. Green screening should be retained and enhanced as outlined in Figure 5.28 to preserve the visual settlement edges and views along the Walden Road and from the Cam Valley.
3. Access to the residential dwellings should provide safe pedestrian and vehicular access.
4. Access for construction traffic should minimise disruption to residents of Little Chesterford.
5. Provision of, or contribution to, recreational facilities.
6. Footways should connect the housing to the existing pedestrian network along the B184 and the Old Walden Road.
7. A minimum of a single electric vehicle charging point should be installed at each of the houses. These should be provided, fully wired and connected, ready to use before first occupation.
8. Secure cycle parking facilities should be provided for each dwelling.
9. Contribution to cycle paths connecting Little Chesterford to Cambridge and Saffron Walden.

Chapter 6 – Community Projects

6.1 The Great Chesterford Village Plan 2015, the Little Chesterford Village Survey 2016 and the 2018 consultation identified the following issues that cannot be directly addressed within this Neighbourhood Plan.

6.2 Some of the issues identified have subsequently been successfully addressed:

- allotments have been created;
- a community orchard has been planted;
- the village shop has been reopened, replacing the desire for a farmers' market.

6.3 Improvements to station facilities, including parking, better access to northbound platform, toilets and coffee facilities – there is some money from s106 agreements for improvements. Great Chesterford Parish Council will continue to press for ongoing improvements.

6.4 Improved use of sustainable modes of transport – the Parish Councils will continue to look for opportunities to support residents in campaigning for increased use of sustainable methods of transport.

6.5 Parking issues – Great Chesterford Parish Council will continue to engage with Essex Highways, the school, the surgeries and local businesses about parking concerns.

6.6 Traffic calming – Great Chesterford Parish Council will continue to engage with Essex County Council and Essex Police regarding speeding in certain areas of the village. Little Chesterford Parish Council will continue to work with Chesterford Research Park on minimising traffic through the village.

6.7 Footpaths, bridleways and cycleways – both Parish Councils will continue to work with local landowners to maintain local footpaths, bridleways and cycleways.

6.8 Improvements to the visibility and profile of areas of historical interest within the Plan area, building on the recent events such as *The Big Dig*, *There But Not There*, etc. – the Parish Councils will continue to work with residents and local organisations.

6.9 Dog mess – Great Chesterford Parish Council has installed new dog bins and have raised the issue via village communication channels and will continue to do so.

6.10. Youth facilities for the under 19s – both Parish Councils will continue to engage with local clubs and residents.

6.11 Improve broadband in the villages – fibre optic cabling is now available to some residents. Both Parish Councils will continue to work with Essex County Council on this issue.

6.12 Needs of an ageing population – the Parish Councils will continue to engage with Uttlesford District Council and local groups to try to address these concerns.

6.13 Community facilities – the Parish Councils will continue to work with local groups, such as the Scouts, to assist in the provision of the appropriate facilities for these groups.

Chapter 7 – Appendix

List of evidence base documents

The following documents have been used as the evidence base for this Plan. All of these documents are available on the Great Chesterford Parish Council Website:
https://www.lovegreatchesterford.com/evidence

- Basic Conditions Statement
- Consultation Statement
- SEA/HRA Determination Statement
- Strategic Policies for Uttlesford Local Plan Adopted 2005
- GLCNP Housing Land Assessment – July 2020
- GLCNP Housing Site Selection – March 2021
- Great Chesterford Village Plan 2015
- Little Chesterford Village Survey 2016
- GC Conservation Area Appraisal 2007
- Historic Environment Assessment 2016
- Landscape Character Assessment 2017
- Landscape Character Assessment – maps x 6
- Landscape Character Assessment – area summary
- Important Views Designation Report
- Local Green Spaces Designation Report
- Indicative Housing Requirement Figure – 23 March 2021
- UDC Local Wildlife Site Review 2007

These can also be found, together with further information supporting the making of the Neighbourhood Plan, on Uttlesford District Council's website:
https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/chesterfordsnp

Produced by the Great and Little Chesterford Parish Councils Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group with help from many in both communities.

September 2022