

TEMPSFORD PARISH CHARACTER ASSESSMENT



Whearsheaf Pub, Church End



Church End, looking south from Memorial Gardens entrance



St Peter's Church



Estate Houses, Church End



Stonebridge Farmhouse, Station Road



No. 59 Station Road



The Old White Hart, No. 61 Station Road



Tingey's Farm, Station Road

Prepared by the Tempsford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

2021

Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	Methodology	4
3	A brief history of Tempsford	2
4	General characteristics of the village as a whole.....	3
	Character Area 1: Station Road	8
	Character Area 2: Church End	16
	Significant local views	20
	Design considerations	24

1 Introduction

- 1.1 A neighbourhood plan is a way of helping local communities influence the planning of the area in which they live and work. It can be used to –
- (a) Develop a shared vision for the neighbourhood
 - (b) Choose where new homes, shops, offices and other developments should be built
 - (c) Identify and protect important local green spaces
 - (d) Influence what new buildings should look like.

This Character Assessment is an important part of the last item.

“A character assessment is a document that describes the distinct appearance and feel of a settlement or an area. It communicates the key physical features and characteristics that combine to give a particular settlement or an area its local distinctiveness and unique identity.”¹

- 1.2 This Character Assessment of Tempsford has been prepared by the Tempsford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to inform the Neighbourhood Plan and is based on the guidelines offered by Planning Aid England – a professional planning organisation and part of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI).
- 1.3 The purpose of the Character Assessment is to understand and record the distinct features of the village and wider parish, which combine to create its unique character.
- 1.4 The approach the Steering Group have used is to identify and record broad character areas using on-site fieldwork, site checks and local knowledge together with photographs to illustrate the houses and other features, all of which make the Parish of Tempsford the unique place it is, not just another place to build standard developer housing.
- 1.5 Members of the Tempsford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group carried out all the on-site fieldwork and, although the Group’s members are not professional planners, they believe this Character Assessment adequately reflects Tempsford’s unique qualities. The intention of this document is to assist developers, builders and planners to ensure that any new developments in Tempsford are in-keeping with the character of the surrounding context and do not duplicate those aspects that are detracting from it.
- 1.6 The area covered by the Tempsford Neighbourhood Plan mirrors the parish boundary as shown in Figure 1 below. The document should be read in conjunction with the Conservation Area reports: Tempsford (Langford End) ²and Tempsford (Church End)³.

¹ Planning Aid England, Royal Town Planning Institute - How to prepare a Character Assessment

² http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/tempsford-langford_tcm3-12974.pdf

³ http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/tempsford_tcm3-12973.pdf

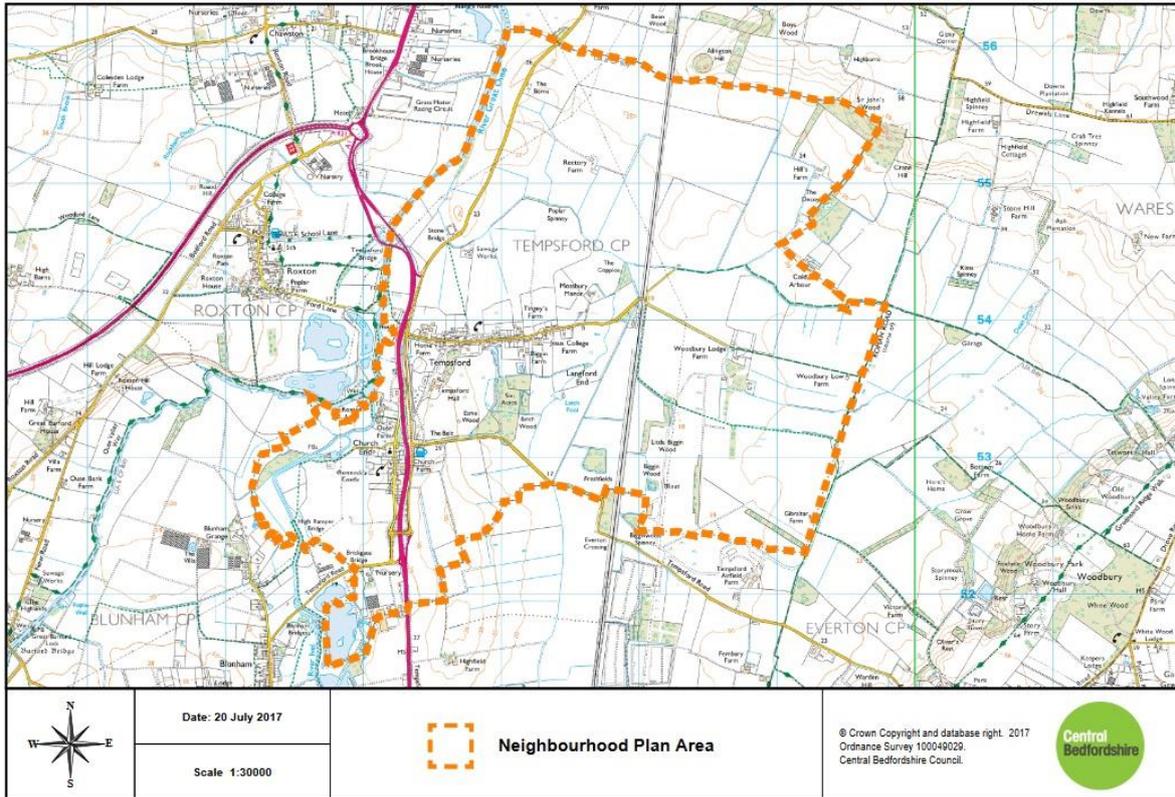


Figure 1: Tempsford Neighbourhood Plan boundary

1. Methodology

2.1. In December 2018, members of the Steering Group walked all the roads and interconnecting paths in the village areas and, using a pro-forma template covering ten physical aspects of the environment, noted the details and took photographs. The ten aspects explored were:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| i. Layout | vi. Landmarks |
| ii. Topography | vii. Buildings and details |
| iii. Spaces | viii. Streetscape |
| iv. Roads, Streets, Routes | ix. Land use |
| v. Green and natural features | x. Views |

2.2. In preparing this Character Assessment for Tempsford, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group identified two distinct character areas: Station Road (divided into the western part and eastern part by the railway line) and Church End. These are shown in Figure 2.1.

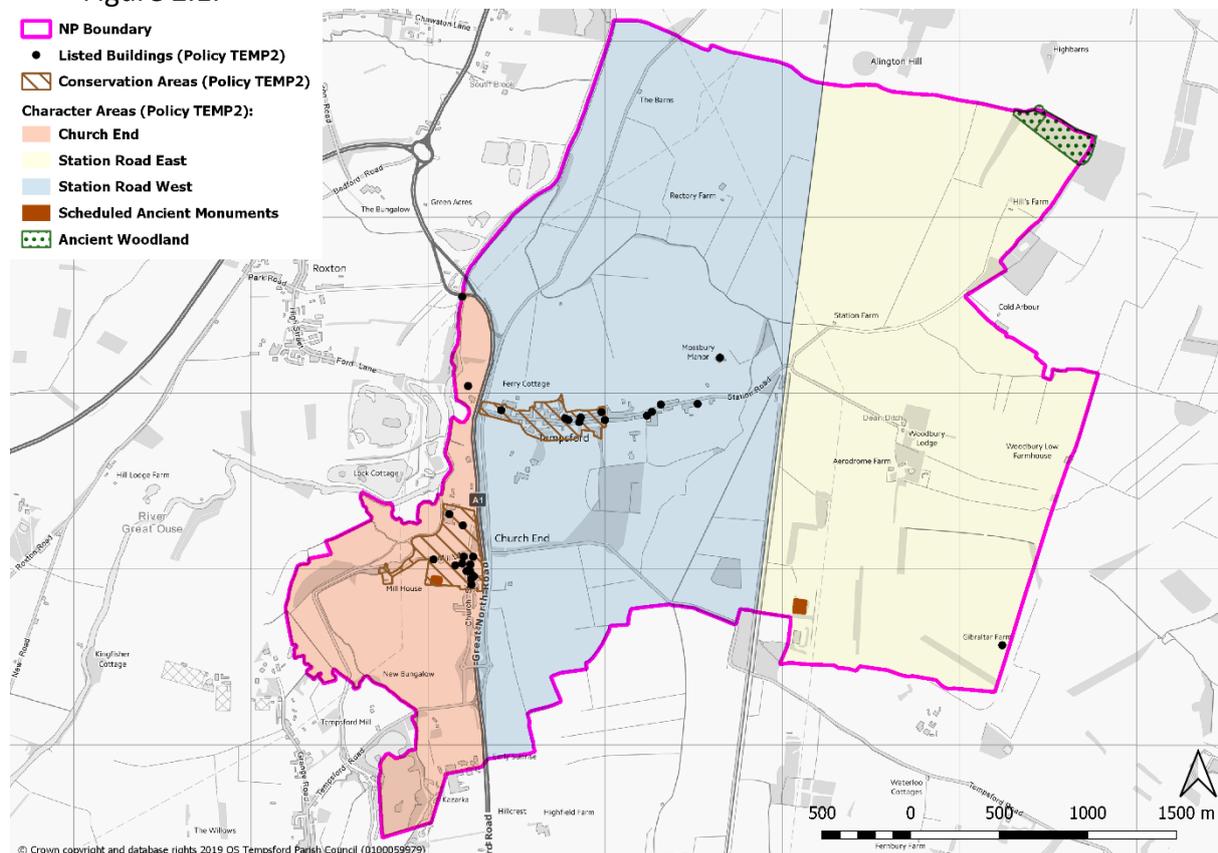


Figure 2.1: Conservation and Character Areas

2.3. There may be individual properties which are not typical of the general character of the area but the group has tried to identify the general feel of the area. Whilst the Steering Group members are not professional planners, they have followed the guidance set out by Planning Aid to produce the work and collectively have a strong local knowledge of the area.

2. A brief history of Tempsford

- 3.1. The rural parish of Tempsford is situated in open countryside at the north-eastern boundary of the county of Bedfordshire. The 2011 census recorded a population of 590 people, largely living in the main settlement of Tempsford village. The nearest larger settlements, beyond the parish boundary, are Bedford to the west, Cambridge to the east, St Neots to the north and Stevenage to the south.
- 3.2. The parish has a long history of settlement, one of the earliest reminders being the earthwork known as the Gannocks, which dates to 921. The Domesday Book records four manors in Tempsford, including Tempsford Manor and Mossbury, which later became one, although the original manor houses no longer remain.
- 3.3. The western part of the parish lies within the Great Ouse Clay Valley, which follows the courses of the Rivers Great Ouse and Ivel including their confluence at Tempsford. The landscape here is categorised by hedgerows, woodland belts and parkland. The remainder of the parish sits within the Biggin Wood Clay Vale, a remote and very rural landscape with scattered arable farms, which is home to the Tempsford airfield.
- 3.4. The village of Tempsford itself, located just before the junction with the A428 at the Black Cat Roundabout, is unusual in that it is effectively split in half by the A1. Residents refer to the two halves as Church End, to the west of the A1, and Station Road, to the east. The majority of community facilities are located in Church End, including the Stuart Memorial Hall, St Peter's Church, the Millennium Garden, a public house and a private members club, a children's playground and playing field and some local businesses. Much of this area falls within the Tempsford (Church End) Conservation Area, with a series of listed buildings.
- 3.5. Station Road is a linear development of residential properties and farms, some of which house small businesses. The western end was designated as the Tempsford (Langford End) Conservation Area in 1994 and is home to a number of listed buildings and structures. Tempsford Hall, the former headquarters of Kier Group Ltd is sited here, as well as the Wesleyan Chapel and a small playground. At the eastern end of the village, the road is crossed by the main railway line from London to Peterborough. Beyond the railway line is Tempsford airfield, a former Royal Air Force station.

3. General characteristics of the village as a whole

Findings from the walkabout:

Aspect explored	Description
<p>Topography</p>	<p>The parish is largely flat and beyond the line of housing extends farmland. The village centre is 24 metres (79 ft) above sea level. The whole parish is low lying and flat with the highest point just over 50 metres (164 ft) at Sir John's Wood in the far north-east.</p> <p>The area of the village within the Station Road character area in particular is afforded views across the wider landscape. Much of the housing is located along the road in a linear fashion, with limited backfill. Where there are gaps, the landscape is visible directly from the village core. The Rivers Ivel and Ouse wind their way through the parish to the west.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>View looking east from Station Road</i></p>
<p>Land uses</p>	<p>The land has historically been farmed and whilst only a handful of working farms remain, the landscape retains this look and feel. Within the two halves of village are businesses, religious uses (church, chapel, graveyard), community and leisure (Stuart Memorial Hall, Millennium Garden, playgrounds/play areas), walks and bridleways. There is some ancient woodland to the far north east of the parish and patches of mature woodland clustered throughout. Tempsford Hall in the Station Road end of the village dates to 1769, although it was rebuilt in 1898 following a fire; it retains its dominant footprint in the parish, and is the former headquarters for the Kier construction group.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Entrance to Tempsford Hall</i></p>
<p>Layout</p>	<p>Similar to many Bedfordshire towns and villages, the two halves of the settlement are largely linear in form, but with a winding road.</p>

	 <p style="text-align: center;"><i>View along linear Station Road</i></p>
<p>Roads, Streets, Routes</p>	<p>The village is unusual in that it is effectively cut in two by the A1. This has caused the two halves of the village to evolve their own distinctive identities in terms of their appearance and general feel. There are numerous footpaths in the parish, a level crossing to the eastern end of Station Road, bridleways, narrow roads, cul-de-sacs, and the footbridge over A1 linking the two sides of the village, link road (A1 – St. Neots).</p> <p>Station Road has areas with no pavement due to the proximity of the older houses in particular. Grass verges and stone boundary walls are a common feature. On-street parking is also commonplace due to the age of many of the residences.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Example of narrow pavements and green verges</i></p>
<p>Spaces</p>	<p>Within the settlement itself, there are numerous open spaces including playing fields, playgrounds, the recreation ground (picnic area), graveyard, village hall, Millennium Garden. Gaps between buildings afford extensive views across open fields and are valued locally.</p> 

	<i>Example of view across the fields between dwellings</i>
Buildings	<p>Despite its size, the parish benefits from a mix of residential styles of property including detached houses, terraced cottages, detached and terraced bungalows, converted barn and farmhouses. These vary in date with some properties Grade II listed. A full detail of the listed buildings in the Area is included in Appendix A. There are examples of buildings that have been converted from businesses (including shops) to housing. In addition, there are farm yards, numerous listed buildings/conservation area, two public houses, a farm shop, the pumping stations, sewage works and Tempsford Hall.</p> <p>Traditional building materials, methods and features include: thatched roofs, colourwash over timberframe, weatherboarding, red brick, slate roofs, shutters.</p> <div data-bbox="504 692 1259 1167" data-label="Image"> </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Example of timber-framed, whitewashed dwelling with thatched roof</i></p>
Landmarks	<p>There are numerous Grade II listed buildings throughout the parish, detailed in Appendix A.</p> <p>St. Peter's Church has a Grade II* listing and dates from the 14th century. It is constructed of coursed ironstone, cobbles and clunch with large parts of clunch and ironstone banding. Considerable repairs were made in 1621, especially in the south-west part of the church and the tower. The whole building was restored in 1874.</p> <p>Other notable listed buildings and structures include the Methodist Chapel, which was built in 1804, the War Memorial and Gibraltar Farm Barn.</p> <p>There are two scheduled ancient monuments: Gannock Castle and Biggin Wood Moat. There is a patch of ancient woodland to the north east of the parish.</p>

	 <p><i>The Grade II* listed Church of St Peter</i></p>
<p>Green & natural features</p>	<p>Beyond the two halves of the village, the parish is very rural with ancient trees, hedgerows, private hedges/bushes/trees, grass verges, fields, woods, bridleways, country paths and ancient rights of way. The various green features provide a network of habitats for a range of flora and fauna.</p>  <p><i>Esmé Woods, home to many species of woodland birds including nuthatches, tree creepers and woodpeckers, and it offers potential nesting sites for buzzards and red kites. It also has at least one badger sett</i></p>
<p>Streetscape</p>	<p>The streets in the two halves of the village are narrow and often long and winding. All are tarmacked, but very often there are no pavements. As described earlier, narrow grass verges are a common feature, in particular in front of older properties, which sit almost directly on the road.</p> <p>There are numerous distinctive features of the streetscape in Tempsford including traditional boundary walls and fences and seasonal planting at both entrances to the village, and at playgrounds. More modern additions include lampposts, street signage, litter bins and dog litter bins.</p>



Example of traditional boundary walls

Views

The land is very flat across the parish. This means that where views out are visible, between and behind buildings, they are wide and expansive across farmland. Views are presented in more detail later in this report. They are a mixture of views of the 'green horizon' and views onto historically important assets within the parish.



View south from Mill Lane to High Ramper Bridge

4. A Walk through the Character Areas

- 4.1. The Parish is small compared to many in Central Bedfordshire, its two halves of the village being naturally separated by the A1. For the purposes of this exercise, therefore, the Parish is divided into two distinct character areas:
 - Station Road (both east and west of the railway line); and
 - Church End.
- 4.2. There are extensive views of the surrounding countryside from both parts of the village, and land use comprises farmland, housing and green open spaces, front gardens, hedges and many mature trees, some of which have Tree Preservation Orders. All this combines to produce an overall green and very rural landscape.
- 4.3. Parts of the identified Character Areas fall within the two Conservation Areas, but importantly, they extend beyond the Conservation Areas. The views across the fields surrounding the village, for instance, form part of the character; the Parish is very small and its boundaries are not very far from the settlement areas of Station Road and Church End.
- 4.4. The Parish contains important archaeological and historic landscape features as well as historic and traditional buildings, some Grade II listed. These all contribute to the character and appearance of both the Conservation Area and the wider Parish. A summary of the Areas is provided below with photographs

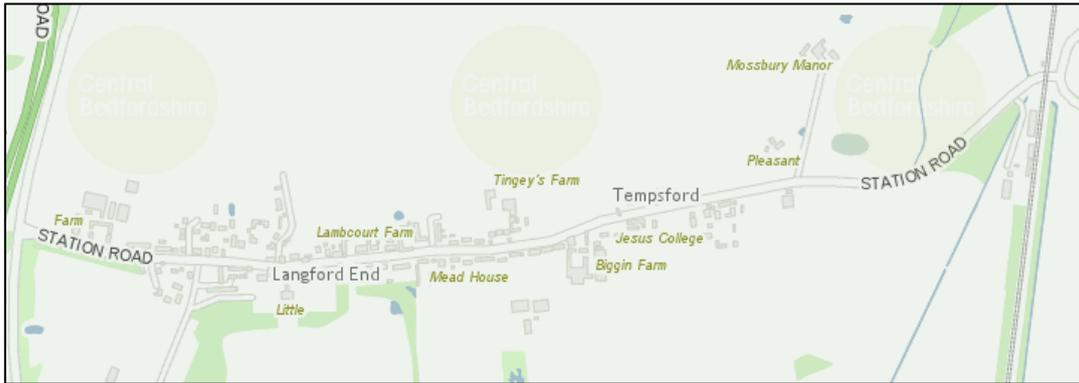
Character Area 1: Station Road

Summary

- 4.5. This character area is effectively divided by the railway line to form:
- 4.6. Station Road – east of railway line: East of the railway line is comprised of farmland and woods, northwards to the boundary with Little Barford, east and south to the boundary with Everton. Here can be found the ancient Moat near Biggin Wood, alongside footpaths, bridleways and waymarked paths from which walkers can enjoy the natural beauty of the landscape. One of these waymarked paths (a Roman road) leads to the Gibraltar Farm Barn, a memorial to the SOE operations carried out during World War II from RAF Tempsford which was sited at Gibraltar Farm.
- 4.7. Station Road – west of railway line: West of the railway line farmland stretches west to the A1, north to Little Barford and south to the boundary with Everton and includes the majority of the housing stock, built as “ribbon development”. This comprises the conservation area properties covering the 15th to 18th century, as well as more modern constructions, barn conversions, Tempsford Estate housing and Tempsford Hall, as well as farms, arable and livestock.

Fuller description

- 4.8. Station Road has a linear settlement pattern but is winding and narrow on its entire length. There are only three small turnings, of no great depth, off Station Road, comprising cottages and houses. The mix of building ages, styles, architectural design and use of colour and materials has led to a diverse streetscape.



Linear street pattern of Station Road

- 4.9. The buildings in Station Road itself are largely set close to the road and pavements run along one side only of the road, with grass verges on the other. These narrow pathways can make it difficult for pedestrians and cyclists to navigate the village and this is exacerbated when there are cars parked along the street, often overlapping the pavements.



Example of pavements along one side and grass verge along the other

- 4.10. On initial approach to Station Road, it is very obvious that we are entering a country village. Views are directed along Station Road towards the east. At the entrance to Station Road on the north side behind metal fencing is a row of tall trees, irregularly spaced, through which open countryside can be seen. The belt of largely ancient trees which separates the A1 from the link road providing access to Station Road formerly fringed Tempsford Hall and form a vital feature in the character of the village.



Despite the A1 being located literally to the west of Station Road, the initial entry into the village gives an immediate impression of rurality. The open fields to the left and right, with the mature trees evokes a sense of entering nature. The stone walls serve to narrow the road and slow down the traffic

- 4.11. The railings change to a wall, similar to the park wall opposite, and this wall continues up to Stonebridge Farmhouse and three barn conversions. The local farming heritage has evolved over the years and barn conversions are more common now. The conversion of barns is encouraged, as it can provide much needed local housing, without the need for additional space taken up. Barns by their very nature tend to be one storey high and therefore do not break up the views across to the wider countryside. Their location can often mean that off-street parking is easier to provide.



Example of a barn conversion, using materials sympathetic to the local context, and offering the potential for off-street parking. The provision of hedges and planting helps to maintain the rural feel of the village, while providing stepping stone habitats for wildlife

- 4.12. The Farmhouse is a listed building, within the conservation area and is one of three working farms in Station Road. On the south side opposite, the buff and red brick wall marks the edge of the park surrounding Tempsford Hall. Behind this is a mixture of tall, mature parkland trees. The many trees forming part of the parkland are covered by a Tree Preservation Order,

and Tempsford Hall itself is of historic and architectural interest. Tempsford Hall and its surrounding parkland are an important and integral part of the Parish.



Lambcourt Farm, an example of one of the three working farms in Tempsford today. Grade II listed



Tempsford Hall (c/o Kier Group)

- 4.13. The regular height and continuous line of the wall leads the eye eastwards and moving on along the winding road, the character and appearance of the Conservation Area changes. There is a mix of houses of different types and quality. Most of the historic houses are modest in size, rectangular and of simple form. Their detailing comes from the type of construction and materials used and is unfussy.
- 4.14. The earliest buildings within the substantial Conservation Area date from the 16th century, others from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, with timber frames, plastered panels and render and some with thatched roofs. The rendered houses are usually coloured white or cream, and weather boarding is found on farm and outbuildings.



88 Station Road is a Grade II listed cottage dating to the 16th century. It is constructed of close-studded timber framing with colourwashed plaster infill. The left-hand side has been extended slightly in red brick and the ground floor of the right-hand side has been rebuilt in red brick. The roof is composed of clay tiles



139 Station Road was listed by English Heritage in November 1986 as Grade II, of special interest. It is thought to date from the 17th century and is timber-framed with colourwashed roughcast render beneath a thatched roof



Stonebridge Farmhouse 18th century, red brick with stucco to front, Grade II listed



36 and 38 Church Street were listed by English Heritage in November 1986 as Grade II, of special interest. The pair of cottages are thought to be 18th century in date. They are timber-framed and covered with colour-washed roughcast render, with thatched roofs

4.15. The Estate houses have decorative features picked out in brickwork.



Estate Houses - these houses were built by the Tempsford Estate in 1876 as housing for tenants. They are constructed in yellow brick, with red brick facings and with slate roofs. They comprise two storeys

4.16. Several of the more recently constructed buildings, e.g. Home Farm Close and Stuart Court, sympathetically imitate some of the decorative brickwork features of the Estate houses and are enclosed with walls and trees, continuing the theme encountered on entering Station Road.



Stuart Court using yellow brick with red brick incorporated above windows. Also featuring the gables, which are characteristic of the Estate Houses



Houses along Home Farm Lane incorporate decorative red brick pattern and gable design

4.17. There are also a number of more modern terraced bungalows and semi-detached houses, some of which have not picked up the detailing of previous architecture.

4.18. Within the Conservation Area stands the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, built in 1804, the oldest chapel on the St. Neots Circuit.



The Methodist Chapel, a converted Brewhouse, is one of the first Methodist chapels to have been registered, in 1794

4.19. Half way along on the south side of the road stands a Grade II listed 17th century dovecote, one of a total of 34 listed sites in the Parish.



The Dovecote, dating to the 17th century is a Grade II listed timber framed structure with red brick infill. It has a clay tile roof, hipped to lower part and gabled to upper part.

- 4.20. Between the gaps in the houses, echoing the Parish throughout, can be seen trees, hedges and fields and the properties add to this with their own hedges, trees and lawns.



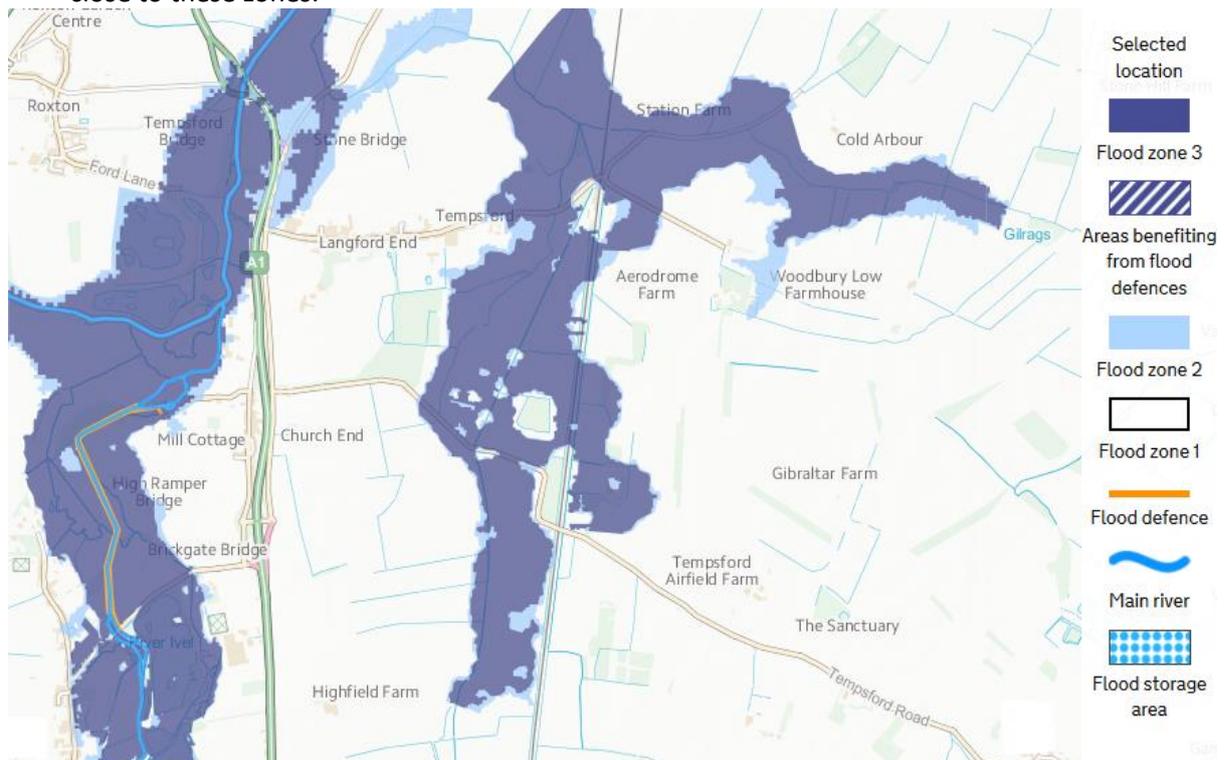
Examples of views across the fields on the north and south sides of Station Road

- 4.21. Approximately two thirds of the way along Station Road, pavements disappear and residential properties give way to farmland on either side with far reaching views, bounded by hedges, trees and ditches as far as the level crossing and beyond.



Open farmland with hedgerows typical within the village setting

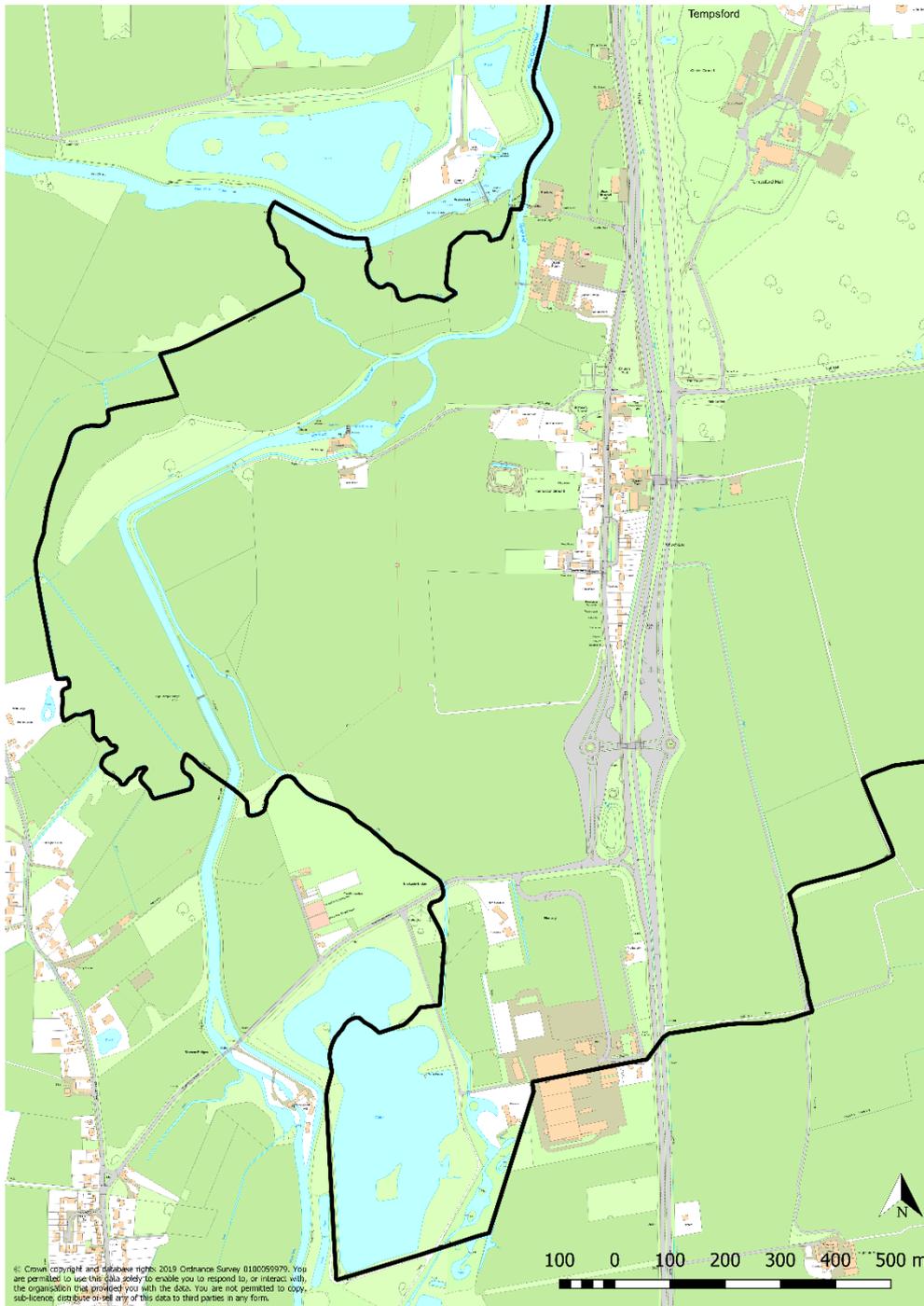
- 4.22. On the south side of the road before the level crossing, is a small business complex in the former goods yard of what was Tempsford Railway Station, and behind this is the old station master's house and a row of six workers cottages, all built around 1893.
- 4.23. There is a significant area of flood plains within the Parish and a number of its properties lie close to these zones.



Map showing the flood zones in the parish (taken from the Environment Agency flood mapping)

- 4.24. Across the railway line lies the Grade II listed Gibraltar Farm Barn, unmade narrow access roads to farms, bridleways, a Roman road and Biggin Wood moated enclosure, a Scheduled Ancient Monument stated to be an above average example of a Bedfordshire moated enclosure.

Character Area 2: Church End



Summary

4.25. Church End, its conservation area and farmland are bounded to the west and north by Roxton and by Blunham to the south. The River Great Ouse passes through this side of the Parish, providing riverside walks along waymarked paths. The scheduled ancient monument Gannock Castle, constructed between 1250 and 1350 AD lies just beyond the playing field in Church End and, as with Station Road, Church End's conservation area properties date from the 15th century.

Fuller description

4.26. The road in Church Street is fairly wide and straight with pavements and grass verges, and the properties face the road in a linear fashion.



The wide road running through Church Street

4.27. There is a pleasant mix of farm buildings, detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows with large frontages, trees, walls and hedges. The Estate houses mirror those in Station Road, as do some of the newer houses.



The pair of Grade II cottages are thought to be 18th century in date. They are timber-framed and covered with colour-washed roughcast render, with thatched roofs. They comprise one storey with attics. A slated lean-to addition has been made to the right-hand gable end



The Gannocks is a Grade II listed timber-framed property, formally a public house. Much of the building is encased in colourwashed brick. The house has clay tiled roofs and is mostly two-storeyed, the left-hand cross-wing having two storeys with attics



Estate houses, like those along Station Road, were built by the Tempsford Estate and feature red and yellow brickwork with gabled windows



Church Farm House is Grade II listed and is thought to date to the 16th century, with re-working in the 17th and 19th centuries. Like many Tempsford buildings, it is timber-framed, brick-faced at the front and mostly colourwashed-rendered; it has clay tiled roofs

4.28. The Millennium Garden Sanctuary was the original entrance to Tempsford Hall. It lies on the east side of Church Street and was created by local residents. It is a haven for wildlife and comprises many trees and shrubs. In front of the Garden stands a War Memorial to those who died in two world wars and those who flew on secret missions from Tempsford Airfield in World War II.



The Millennium Garden

4.29. To the south of the War Memorial stands the 17th century Wheatsheaf public house.



The Wheatsheaf public house is Grade II listed dating to the late 18th/ early 19th century. It is colour-washed roughcast render, apparently containing some timber framing

4.30. Opposite is the Grade II* listed St. Peter's Church and its graveyards.



St Peter's Church as it is today dates to the 14th century, although there are records of there being a church in the village since around the time of the Norman Conquest



The Old Rectory, close by the Church, dates from the 16th Century, was substantially altered and extended in the late 19th Century and is Grade II listed

- 4.31. Mill Lane, to the north of the Church leads to the Ivel, an unspoilt rural by-way pleasantly lined by tall trees and hedges. The River Ivel forms an integral part of the Conservation Area and provides access to the former Tempsford Saw Mill upstream of the confluence of the Rivers Ivel and Ouse. The area has far reaching unbroken views across fields, south, north and west.
- 4.32. Further along Church End stands the well-equipped village community hall, The Stuart Memorial Hall, which includes a car park and a large expanse of lawn to the rear, bounded by trees, hedges and farmland. Very many activities take place here and its facilities are marketed by village volunteers.



The Stuart Memorial Hall was built in 1924 by the Stuart family of Tempsford Hall as a war memorial to their only son William Esmé Montagu Stuart and fourteen other Tempsford men killed in the Great War

- 4.33. At the northern end of Church End to the west lies more farmland bounded on one side by the River Ouse. The old Tempsford Village School and school master's house stand to the north of this farmland and beyond those buildings is the Grade II listed Victorian Anchor Hotel public house. There is a popular riverside walk from here for 1.5 miles back to Church Street.



The Old Anchor, formerly The Anchor Inn but also known as Ferry Cottages, is Grade II listed - the oldest parts are thought to date from the 17th century and the building is timber-framed and mostly cased in colour-washed brick, with clay tiled roofs

5. Significant local views

- 5.1. The parish is very flat, which affords long and far-reaching views across the landscape. Figure 6.1 provides a map of the most significant views that have been collated by the local community and these are detailed further in Figure 6.2.
- 5.2. Whilst it might be considered restrictive to attempt to preserve every view out towards the countryside, the purpose is to provide a flavour of what is valued by the community so that this can be considered as part of any development proposal. The aim is to preserve the long-distance views that are felt to contribute significantly to the local character.

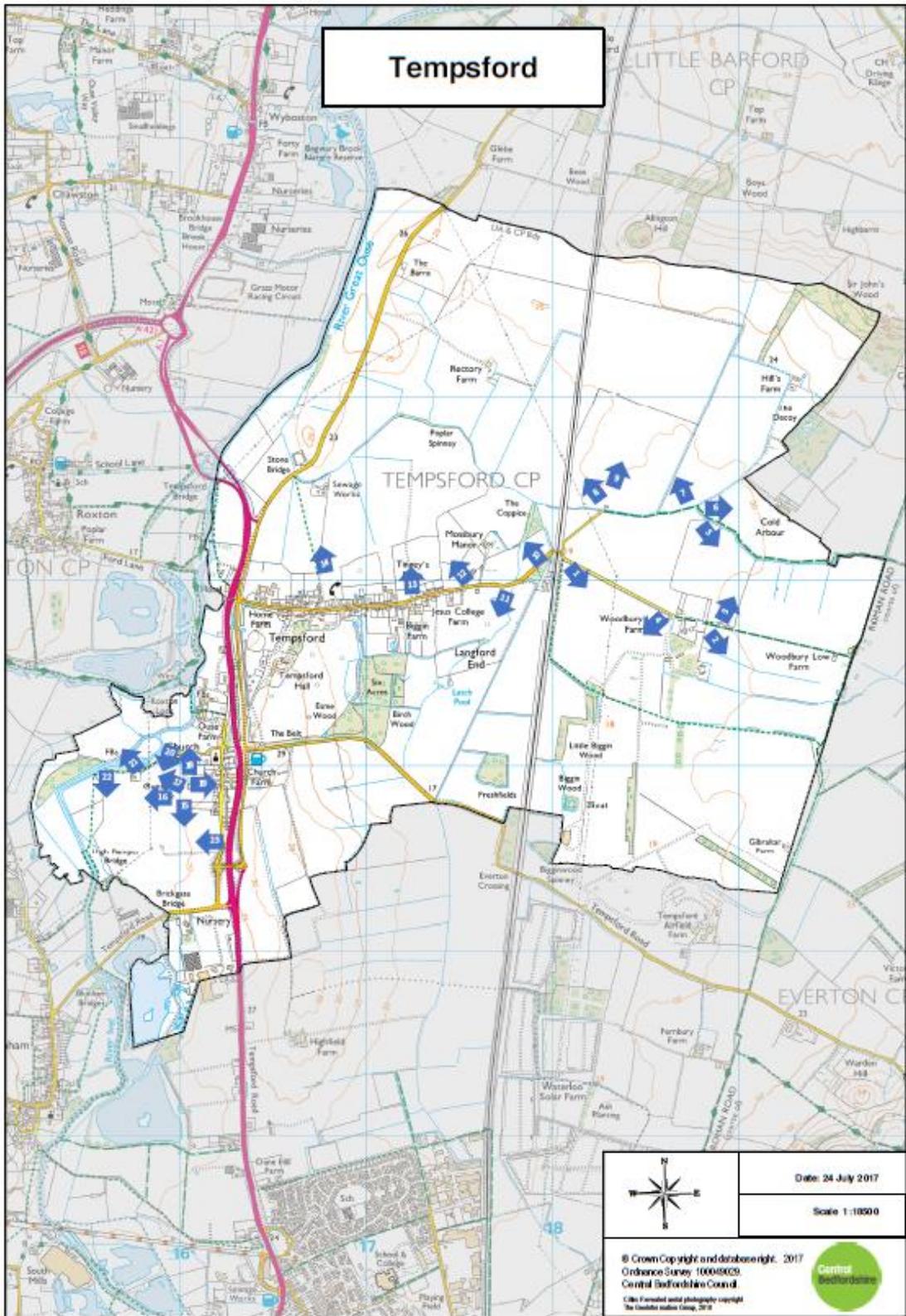


Figure 6.1: Map showing the extent of view from the village to the open countryside.

Station Road Locations

Photo Location No.	Name/Description of view
No. 1	East of rail line. S/E view towards Little Biggin Wood
No. 2	East of rail line. View towards Woodbury Low Farm
No. 3	East of rail line. View towards Woodbury Lodge Farm
No. 4	East of rail line. View S towards Aerodrome Farm
No. 5	East of rail line. View S from Cold Arbour
No. 6	East of rail line. View S/E towards Cold Arbour
No. 7	E of rail line. N/W towards Rectory Farm & Parish boundary with L. Barford
No. 8	Ditto
No. 9	E of rail line. N/N/E towards Rectory Farm & boundary with L. Barford
No. 10	W of rail line, from rail crossing W towards Mossbury Manor
No. 11	From Station Road, S/W to Jesus College Farm
No. 12	From Station Road, N/W towards Mossbury Manor
No. 13	From Station Road, N to Tingey's Farm
No. 14	At Bakers Lane, N/W towards Stone Bridge/Sewage Works

Church End Locations

Photo Location No.	Name/Description of view across fields
No. 15	S/E from Gannock Castle towards Sawfords Meadow
No. 16	S/W from Gannock Castle to High Ramper Bridge
No. 17	W from Gannock Castle towards Mill Lane and River Ivel
No. 18	N/W within Gannock Castle grounds
No. 19	S from Mill Lane towards Gannock Castle
No. 20	N/W from Mill Lane towards boundary with Roxton
No. 21	S from Mill Lane to High Ramper Bridge
No. 22	N/W from Church Street towards Gannock Castle
No. 23	SW from entrance to Church End towards River Ivel

Images illustrating the wide, sweeping views that contribute to Tempsford's character



View 3: East of rail line. N View towards Woodbury Lodge Farm



View 4: East of rail line. View S towards Aerodrome Farm



View 5: East of rail line. View S from Cold Arbour



View 10: W of rail line, from rail crossing W towards Mossbury Manor



View 23: SW from entrance to Church End towards River Ivel



View 13: From Station Road, N to Tingey's Farm



View 19: S from Mill Lane towards Gannock Castle



View 17: W from Gannock Castle towards Mill Lane and River Ivel



View 22: S from Mill Lane across fields towards Tempsford Road

6. Design considerations

Good quality design can improve social wellbeing and the quality of life by improving the built environment, reducing crime, improving public health, easing transport problems and providing supportive neighbourhoods.

In October 2019, a new National Design Guide⁴ was launched, forming part of the Government’s collection of Planning Practice Guidance. It forms a material consideration in the decision-making process, particularly in the absence of local design guidance. The document sets out the ten characteristics necessary for creating a well-designed place, contributing to its physical character, a sense of community and addressing environmental issues affecting climate. The National Model Design Code published in February 2021⁵ provides more detail about the ten characteristics.

The guide Building for a Healthy Life, 2020⁶ is the Government-endorsed industry standard for the design of new housing developments. Building for a Healthy Life is a tool for assessing the design quality of homes and neighbourhoods. Its criteria also link to other standards for housing design, including the Housing Quality Indicators⁷ (HQI) standards and Secured by Design⁸. It provides a framework that stakeholders should use for development along with other policies contained within this plan for the neighbourhood area to achieve the industry standard's 'Built for Life' quality mark.

Having provided a description of the two character areas, the following notes are intended as guidance as to what is being sought in terms of good design at the local Tempsford level and should provide a useful list of aspects for prospective developers to consider in the context of broader advice.

Topic	Development proposals should consider the following:	For Tempsford, this means:
Environmental, social and historic context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the place and identify the qualities that contribute to the local character and how these can contribute to the quality of development. • Take account of and respond to the topography of the landscape and mitigate the impact on this. • Understand the history, geology, transport links, natural landscapes, views, boundaries, landmarks, street pattern. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development complements the local environment within which it is sited. • Urban pattern, grain and rhythm is maintained. • Important views, particularly to the surrounding countryside are maintained. • Significant existing features and buildings are conserved and enhanced.

⁴ [National design guide.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417222/national-design-guide.pdf)

⁵ [National Model Design Code \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417222/national-model-design-code.pdf)

⁶ <https://www.udg.org.uk/publications/othermanuals/building-healthy-life>

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-quality-indicators>

⁸ <https://www.securedbydesign.com/>

Topic	Development proposals should consider the following:	For Tempsford, this means:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development complements the flat topography. • Boundaries are sensitively designed.
Layout of the site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect the features of the specific site, for instance its shape, its topography, existing features and how these can be maintained and enhanced. • Existing hedgerows and trees (with or with Tree Protection Orders) should guide the layout to create wildlife corridors. • Consider the density of the site in comparison to the wider context. • Consider the variations of shapes, height, styles, massing of buildings, colour, materials and decorative features within the local area and incorporate these into the design to enable a 'rhythm of variety'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise opportunities provided by the flat topography to enable views out to the open countryside. • Incorporate existing trees and hedgerows and provide new ones where possible. • Buildings in the area are well-spaced to give a sense of openness leading into the countryside beyond. • Understanding the variety in styles of buildings along the streetscape and avoid monotony.
Quality of architectural design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and architecture should respect the distinctive characteristics of the two character areas. • Consider height, bulk, sight lines. • Ensure access to paths, drainage, storage, car parking, cycles, waste bins, downpipes, meters, gardens, play area, and landscaping are carefully considered and designed from the outset. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being familiar with the distinctive styles of existing buildings. • Enabling innovative design where appropriate. • Integrating services and ancillary requirements into the design. • Respecting the character of the local area.
Landscaping, green spaces and trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguard the quality of the environment and, where possible, enhance it. Existing green lungs should be protected, including hedgerows and trees. • Green spaces and planting should be used to link areas and create wildlife corridors. • Hard landscaping should be practical but interesting and complement the existing public realm. Local material would be preferred. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining and adding to the green verges along the road side. • Enabling provision of pavements or widening of them. • Retain trees and hedgerows, which form an important piece of the local character.

Topic	Development proposals should consider the following:	For Tempsford, this means:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft landscaping should be included around new developments and should incorporate native planting, which might ideally attract wildlife, interest, appreciation and spark discussion. • Trees and hedges should be retained where possible. Native species are preferred for new planting. Lost trees should be replaced either in the same location or nearby. 	
Quality of materials and elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials used should be carefully considered including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colour • Materials • Blending • Adornment • Their sustainability, including their source • How easy they are to maintain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selecting materials that complement the existing features of the character areas, unless there is reason for contrast. • Considering reinterpreting designs and adornments taken from the surrounding context.
Safe and secure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design layouts that meet the requirements of ‘Secure by Design’ and minimise the likelihood and fear of crime. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring development is well-connected to the existing movement route network. • Incorporate lighting into communal areas. • Designing publicly accessible spaces in a way to ensure they are not secluded. • Encourage development to be permeable to encourage the feeling of a community.
Sustainable design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic passive environmental design in a fabric first approach (maximising the performance of the components and materials that make up the building fabric itself, before using mechanical or electrical building services systems). • Integrating renewable energy systems into new development, including existing and new public buildings. • Reduce water consumption through grey water systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making efficient use of resources during construction. • Development should be well-connected to existing footpaths and cycleways to encourage sustainable journeys, particularly within the village itself. • Encourage retrofitting of older properties using new energy technologies.
Parking for vehicles, cycles and other transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the rural location and the need for private vehicles. • Recognise the desire to enable local journeys to take place by foot or bicycle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating parking solutions that minimise on-street parking.

Topic	Development proposals should consider the following:	For Tempsford, this means:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing sufficient off-street parking for cars and bicycles. • Providing infrastructure to enable electric car charging. • Undercover storage areas for bicycles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring development is located near to foot and cycle paths. • Designing safe and covered cycle parking.

