LEIGHTON LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL

LEIGHTON LINSLADE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2024 - 2042

REFERENDUM VERSION: NOVEMBER 2026

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Leighton Linslade Town Council (LLTC) has prepared the first Leighton Linslade Neighbourhood Plan (LLNP) to cover the period from 2024 - 2042. LLTC is defined as a 'qualifying body' for this purpose in line with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

1.2 The Leighton Linslade Neighbourhood Area was designated by Central Bedfordshire Council on the 26th June 2024 as the area to which the policies of the LLNP will apply. A map showing the Neighbourhood Area is shown below. The area coincides with the Town Boundary.

1.3 Leighton Linslade has a population of 42,392 residents (as at Census 2021).

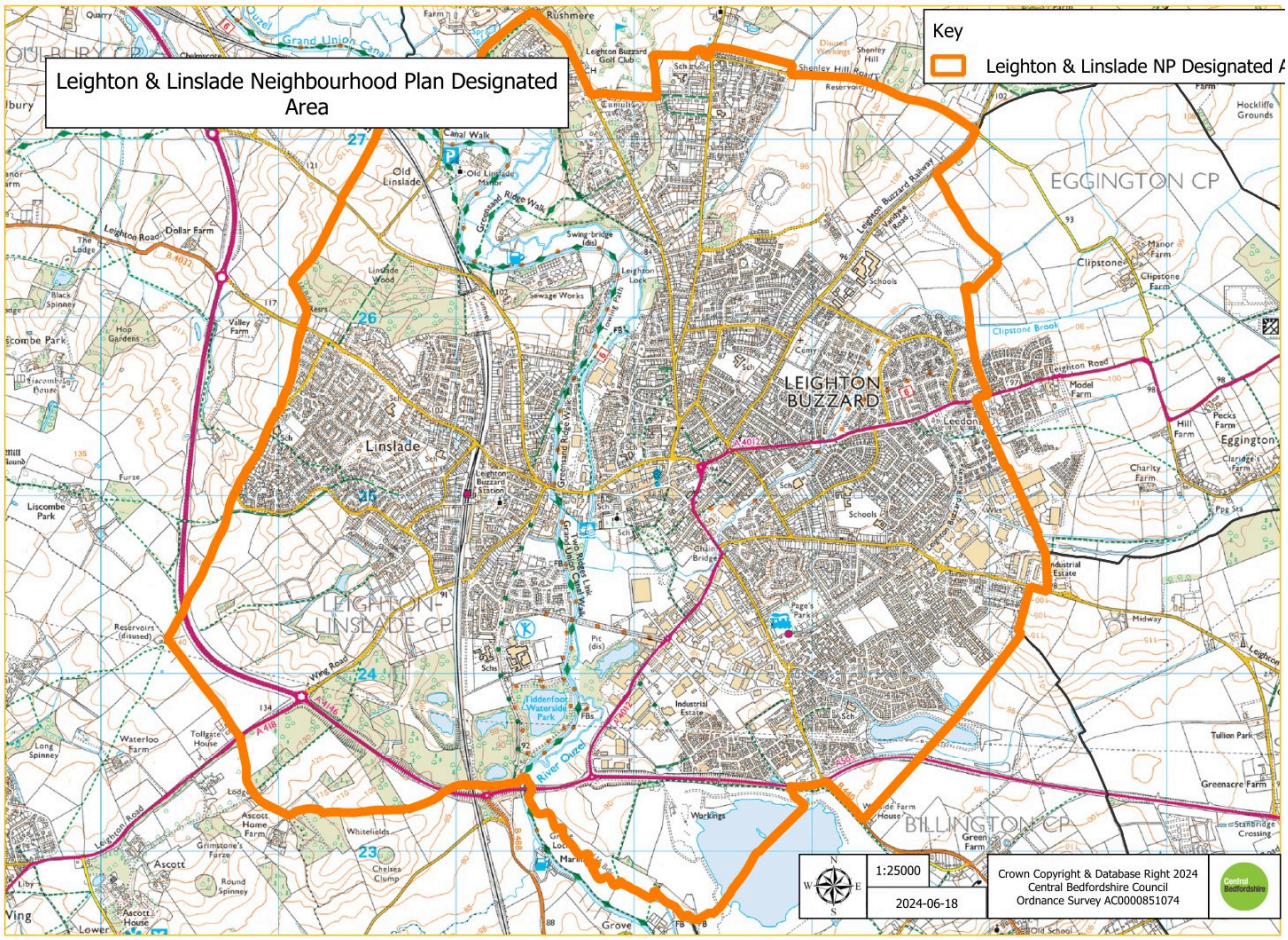


Figure 1 – Leighton Linslade Neighbourhood Plan Area. Key: orange outline – Leighton & Linslade NP Designated Area. Crown Copyright & Database Right 2024, Central Bedfordshire Council, Ordnance Survey AC0000851074.

1.4 The LLNP covers the period from 2024 to 2042. This version contains the referendum version of policies for determining planning applications for the use and development of land within Leighton Linslade during that period. The LLNP will operate alongside other policies of the CBC development plan that relate to Leighton Linslade.

2. BACKGROUND

History

2.1 Leighton Linslade is a civil parish comprising the market town of Leighton Buzzard and the settlement of Linslade, which was historically located in the county of Buckinghamshire. The parish is situated in Bedfordshire, England, in the southwest of the county and close to the Buckinghamshire border. It lies between Aylesbury, Tring, Luton/Dunstable and Milton Keynes, near the Chiltern Hills.

2.2 It is sited in the centre of the country in gentle landscape close to the major Towns of Milton Keynes, Aylesbury, Bedford and Luton.

2.3 It is 36 miles (58 km) northwest of Central London and linked to the capital by the Grand Union Canal and the West Coast Main Line. The built-up area extends on either side of the River Ouzel.

2.4 Leighton Buzzard is a special town but not a town that shouts its presence.

2.5 It is unclear when the town of Leighton Buzzard was initially founded, although some historians believe that there may have been settlement in the area from as early as 571. There are a number of theories concerning the derivation of the town's name: ‘Leighton’ came from Old English Lēah-tūn, meaning 'farm in a clearing in the woods', and one version of the addition of ‘Buzzard’ was that it was added by the Dean of Lincoln, in whose diocese the town lay in the 12th century, from Beau-desert.[4] Another version is that having two communities called ‘Leighton’ and seeking some means of differentiating them the Dean added the name of his local Prebendary or representative to that of the town. At that time it was Theobald de Busar and so over the years the town became known as Leighton Buzzard. In the Domesday Book of 1086, Leighton Buzzard was called Leestone. A further variation may be seen in a legal record of 1424, where "William Dagenale of Leytun Busherd, Beds" appears as a defendant.

2.6 Leighton Buzzard developed into a thriving market town supported by good road, canal and, later, rail links to the agricultural hinterland and London. The town's market charter was granted in 1086 and is still active today. The High Street has numerous historical buildings, more than 70 of which are listed. They include the notable Bank Building on the Market Square designed by the eminent architect Alfred Waterhouse, designer of London's Natural History Museum, London.

2.7 The centre of the town retains the classic Y layout of a medieval market town. This is an essential element of the Town’s heritage which shapes the width and visual characteristics of the roads and buildings in the High Street. The building plots are narrow fronted but deep. The structures are generally on three levels with commercial use on the ground floor and domestic above. Above the commercial use the facades have a common unity and rhythm of domestic scale, materials and fenestration. The roof-scape is an impressive collage of red tiled pitched roofs. Two buildings are of particular national importance and heritage value; All Saints Church to the west and the Market Cross to the east.

2.8 Leighton Buzzard has a rich history as a market town and described in the Domesday Survey as the richest market in Bedfordshire. The market cross in the town centre was built in 1453 and is a scheduled ancient monument. Industry in Leighton Buzzard included the basket making industry which starting around the mid-1700s and Lake Street was the centre of this industry. This industry grew through to the 1800s.

2.9 The settlement of Linslade has also been known by several names throughout the centuries, having been recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle of 966 as Hlincgelad, in the Domesday Book of 1086 as Lincelada and eventually to Lynchelade and finally Linslade. The original St. Mary's Church was built in 1151 by Simon de Beauchamp, but was rebuilt in the 15th Century. In 1251 a royal charter was granted to William de Beauchamp to hold a weekly market in Linslade on a Thursday. In the 13th century, large numbers of pilgrims were attracted to the Holy Well, the site of which is now being excavated.

2.10 In 1785 it was described "as a pleasant and populous town agreeably situated on a branch of the river Ouse and rendered flourishing by a good trade and large markets." These characteristics were maintained by the Georgian and Victorian additions to the town which included the narrow plot sizes, the passages through to the rear of the premises, the use of red brick or rendered facades, and the use of low rise tiled pitched roofs.

2.11 These features have been maintained and currently, with minor exceptions, Leighton Buzzard has retained the best of its early origins with some notable buildings and cohesion of style and proportions of the classic medieval market town. The Town also has immediate access to the canal, river, water meadows, and the countryside for both pedestrians and cyclists.

2.12 These traits and features are of great value and should be fostered in any new development within the Town Centre and in the vicinity of the High Street

2.13 The Junction Canal was dug through Linslade parish and opened at the start of the 1800s and linked London with the Midlands. The London and North Western Railway line opened in 1838 with trains stopping at Linslade on the line between Euston and Manchester. The Wool Fair began in 1840.

2.14 The railway and canal in Linslade prompted a new population to grow up around this area – people were reluctant to travel the two miles to St Mary's Church in Old Linslade so a new church, St Barnabas was built across the meadow from the railway station in the area of New Linslade known as Chelsea New Town. A second LNWR railway line opened in 1848 between Leighton Buzzard and Luton.

2.15 The settlement has had a long association with the Rothschild family, since Lionel de Rothschild bought neighbouring farmlands to the west of the town in 1873. Over time the farm developed into the Ascott House estate located less than 2 miles (3 km) from the town. In the late 19th century, Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild used the now demolished Leighton House and its stabling, on the High Street, as a hunting box.

2.16 The Corn Exchange was built in Lake Street in 1862. In 1965 Leighton Buzzard and Linslade amalgamated to form Leighton Linslade Urban Council and by an Act of

Parliament Linslade was transferred from Buckinghamshire to Bedfordshire. Subsequently, Leighton-Linslade Parish (Town) Council was formed in 1974. Leighton Linslade Southern Bypass opened in 1991.

2.17 Today the town continues to grow and is expanding predominately eastwards, with several developments forming the Eastern Leighton Linslade Urban Extension Scheme. This growth has been substantial and sustained: the 2011 Census recorded a total population of 37,470 with 15,680 households and 16,410 dwellings Central Bedfordshire Council, and by the time of the 2021 Census the population of the parish had risen to 42,392, with estimates placing it at around 43,815 by 2024 Homemove, reflecting a significant upward trajectory driven by ongoing housebuilding.

2.18 The strategic framework for this eastward expansion was established when the East Leighton Linslade Framework Plan was adopted for development management purposes in May 2013, setting out the vision for the urban extension and identifying the indicative location of infrastructure and land uses.

2.19 The strategic framework set out the needs for Healthcare, Leisure and Recreation and Community Use facilities to be delivered within the town through these developments, but those developments have in many cases not been brought forward with the new development.

2.20 While Leighton-Linslade has seen a significant increase in housing, local residents consistently feel that the infrastructure to support the increased population has not been delivered alongside it. There is an active Health Campaign group that has seen significant engagement from local residents in their campaign for improved health facilities, and throughout the engagement with local residents with the Neighbourhood Plan, the lack of health and community facilities in the town has consistently been brought up. While the ICB has updated a health centre in the town, feedback from local residents has been that it lacks proper access and parking, and is not a suitable site for a busy facility. This feedback from local residents drives the desire to see well planned out local facilities delivered in the heart of the town centre, which is served by local bus services as well as having parking provision and is accessible to residents from across the town. This also serves to support the community cohesion of the town through supporting the viability of the town centre.

2.21 The town has a strong sense of community with local events in the town centre being actively supported and having high turnouts across the year. Being able to support and develop that sense of community is an important driver to the plan's desire to see the town centre develop in a way that brings additional value to the town, supporting the town centre businesses, local community groups and services through mixed-use development that builds on the town's history and historic buildings.

Profile

2.22 The population of Leighton Linslade was 42,392 in 2021 growing from 37,469 in the 2011 census and 32,417 in 2001. This number continues to increase with the build out of strategic housing developments predominately to the east of the parish. The parish has a slightly younger age profile than the national average, although the 15 – 25 age group is

below the average, with those in the 30 – 45 category representing the largest demographic, which may reflect the attractiveness of the area for families, particularly those starting a family or with younger children. It may also reflect the attractiveness of the parish for professionals who may work locally or in the surrounding area, given the strong employment offer or the commute into London. Indeed, over 67% are considered economically active, well above the national average, with only 2.5% unemployed, which is consistent with the age profile. With its population growth, the town has become more culturally diverse, adding to the rich tapestry of the local community.

2.23 There are comparatively fewer flats and apartments (17.8%) compared to the national average (22.2%) which may also align with the larger development locations outside of the town centre, which continue to be built as 2-, 3- and 4-bedroom houses. Leighton Linslade is also considered a healthy place to live, with the data indicating that over half of the population are in very good health, with less than 4% in bad or very bad health.

Strategic Planning Policy.

2.24 Whilst no longer a basic condition requirement, the LLNP has been prepared to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 2015 – 2035.

2.25 The key policies affecting Leighton Linslade are:

Policy H1: Housing Mix
Policy R1: Ensuring Town Centre Vitality
Policy R3: Town Centre Development
Policy T2: Highway Safety and Design
Policy T3: Parking
Policy EE1: Green Infrastructure
Policy EE2: Enhancing Biodiversity
Policy EE3: Nature Conservation
Policy EE12: Public Rights of Way
Policy EE13: Outdoor Sport, Leisure and Open Space
Policy CC1 Climate change and sustainability
Policy HQ1: High Quality Development
Policy HQ2: Developer Contributions
Policy HQ3: Provision for Social and Community Infrastructure
Policy HQ9: Larger Sites, Development Briefs and Design Codes
Policy HE3: Built Heritage

2.26 Central Bedfordshire Council is bringing forward a new Local Plan, which will be prepared under the new 30-month Local Plan system. This process is due to commence shortly with a scoping consultation being undertaken during May 2026 with the first formal consultation due towards the end of the year.

2.27 The CBC Local Transport Plan LTP3 (2011 – 2026), includes a number of strategies that are relevant to this Neighbourhood Plan. Of particular relevance are the following:

Sustainable Modes of Travel to Schools Strategy (draft)

Active Travel Strategy (draft)

Parking Enforcement Strategy

On Street Parking Management Strategy

Parking Standards for new developments (SPD)

2.28 Transport Strategy LPT4 is due to be consulted upon by Central Bedfordshire Council in 2026. However, a number of other policy documents of relevance have been produced since LTP3's adoption, including:

Leighton Linslade Local Cycling and Walking infrastructure Plan,

Freight Strategy

The Bus Service Improvement Plan

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy.

2.29 Links to all of the documents above can be found on the Central Bedfordshire Council website or the documents section of the Leighton Linslade Neighbourhood Plan website.

National Planning Policy and Legislation

2.30 The LLNP also has to have regard for national planning policy and guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and supporting Planning Practice Guidance. The Basic Conditions Statement contains full details on how the Plan is consistent with both the current 2024 NPPF but also the draft 2025 NPPF (now 2026 NPPF), with particular reference to the National Decision-Making Policies contained therein, to ensure the Plan has functional weight after adoption.

2.31 The LLNP must demonstrate how its policies contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and how they will not cause any harm to important ecological areas (in respect of the Habitats Regulations). A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) have been prepared to support the LLNP and accompany this submission version of the Plan. These matters are also addressed in the Basic Conditions Statement.

2.32 In respect of the changes to Basic Conditions introduced in March 2026 in The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Commencement No. 11 and Saving and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2026 enacting sections 98 and 99 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, the LLNP is able to demonstrate compliance with the new requirements in respect of mitigation and adaptation to climate change and having regard to the Local Nature recovery Strategy. This is set out in the Basic Conditions Statement alongside evidence to support that the making of the neighbourhood development plan would not result in the overall development plan for the area proposing less housing than if the neighbourhood development plan were not to be made. (This replaces the former Basic Condition that the neighbourhood plan be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area.[1])

Project Progress

2.33 A first early engagement exercise was carried out by the Town Council in February 2024 which included drop-in sessions and an on-line survey, to help shape the scope of any neighbourhood plan. Following the completion of the scoping report, the Town Council approved the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan in June 2024 and the submission of an application to designate the Neighbourhood Plan area.

2.34 The Town Council advertised the formation of the Steering Group and Tasks Teams in summer 2024, seeking expressions of interest from the local community to join one or more group. The volunteers were formally appointed in September 2024, at which point research and evidence gathering began. Steering Group meetings were held every six weeks and task teams met on a more informal basis as needed, continuing until March 2025.

2.35 An informal engagement exercise took place from 17th March to early May 2025 to test the emerging policy intent and help refine the policies prior to drafting of policy wording. Again, this took the form of a survey, drop-in sessions as well as more targeted meetings with key stakeholder groups. The results of both the 2024 and 2025 engagement exercises can be found on the website and in the consultation statement which LLTC will publish as part of the submission documents. This will summarise the nature and outcome of the informal engagement and statutory consultation activities and how they have informed the LLNP.

2.36 Following a review of the informal engagement responses, a first draft of the plan was prepared in June 2025 for initial review by the Steering Group. Further iterations of the pre-submission version of the plan continued to be refined over the summer months, in preparation for approval by the Policy and Finance Committee on the 15th September with further ratification by the Town Council at the end of September, ready to commence the Regulation 14 consultation stage.

2.37 The Regulation 14 consultation ran from Monday 13th October to Sunday 30th November 2025. A report on the representations made was prepared and presented to the Steering Group in December with a first draft of the submission plan subsequently prepared for sign off by the Steering Group in March 2026. The Submission Plan was approved by Policy and Finance Committee in April 2026 and then Full Council prior to submission.

Footnote 1: Basic Condition '(e)' is replaced by '(ea)'. Back to paragraph 2.32

3. OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

3.1 The Vision for the Leighton Linslade Neighbourhood Plan is:

"A 21st century market town that thrives on the strength of its heritage, community, environment and entrepreneurs/creatives".

3.2 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan, are:

1. To promote Leighton Buzzard Town Centre as a modern market town, with a vibrant daytime and evening economy; developing creative and cultural experiential opportunities alongside a strong retail offer.
2. To expand the range of social infrastructure to promote good health, actively reduce social isolation and health inequalities and encourage community cohesion.
3. To celebrate local heritage through recognition of key buildings and locations as well as the creation of dedicated space to display the history of the parish, including its archaeology.
4. To ensure new development promotes high standard in design, including maximising energy efficiency measures.
5. To build on our experience as a Cycle Town to promote active travel and public transport opportunities, improving connectivity between the town centre and the wider community, reducing congestion and encouraging reduced use of the private car for short journeys.
6. To strengthen green and blue infrastructure, ensuring all residents have access, via active and sustainable modes of travel, to high quality places and spaces to support physical and mental wellbeing.
7. To build on the existing initiatives to improve biodiversity, such as the bee-friendly wildflower planting areas and tree planting measures, by ensuring protection of green spaces which can provide enhanced habitats to enable flora and fauna to thrive in harmony with the community.
8. To enable support for climate change mitigation measures and carbon reduction across the community, as well as planning for the possible impact of increasing extreme weather conditions.

3.3 The Neighbourhood Plan contains twelve policies, each of which is intended to contribute to one or more of these objectives. Each policy has a code number and title, and the policy wording is in bold text within a shaded box. Below each policy is some supporting text to explain the intent of the policy and how it should be understood by applicants and applied by CBC to planning applications. The justification of each policy will be contained in the Basic Conditions Statement. Where a policy applies to specific land or sites in Leighton Linslade this is shown on the Policies Map.

Policy LL1: CENTRE OF TOWN RENEWAL

1. The Neighbourhood Plan defines the boundary of the Leighton Linslade Centre of Town, as shown on the Policies Map for the purpose of applying National Decision-Making Policy TC2
2. Proposals will be supported where they can demonstrate regard to the design and development principles established in the "Wider Town Centre Spatial Framework" (Appendix A) for the clusters known as Leighton Buzzard Town Centre, Bridge Meadow/Canal Quarter and Linslade.
   These key principles are:
   - A. Development should celebrate and make the most of its special historic character, reusing old buildings and with heritage informing the design of new ones.
   - B. Leighton Buzzard Town Centre will be a community hub for a friendly town, creating spaces for people to come together in and providing vital local services.
   - C. Be known for a rich mix of town centre uses, including appropriately located and designed housing, which contribute to local character, support local employment and entrepreneurship, and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre.
   - D. Actively nurture creativity with affordable spaces for creative expression.
   - E. Be a greener, more biodiverse town centre than now, linking to the canal, river, parks, and countryside.
   - F. Be easy and pleasant to move around on foot, by bicycle or wheeling, encouraging non-car modes of transport for short trips to reduce congestion and cut pollution, including pedestrianisation measures where these are locally supported.
   - G. Strengthen the Linslade cluster to support this local centre with an identity of its own with places to meet and socialise.
   - H. Support measures which promote a vibrant and lively evening economy.

3.4 This policy provides a high-level spatial approach to ensuring that these three distinct areas function well both individually and together. It responds to renewal and future development of these areas, determining the sense of identity in each. It considers the consequences of future development on this jigsaw puzzle of spaces and locations and how they fit together.

3.5 The wider Town Centre Spatial Framework extends across the central part of Leighton-Linslade. This includes Leighton Buzzard town centre and the centre of neighbouring Linslade. The two are separated by the Grand Union Canal, River Ouzel and the area between these water bodies. Linslade lies west of the Canal, Leighton Buzzard east of the river. The policy provides a higher-level spatial approach to the wider town centre which

is then considered in more detail in policies LL2, LL3, LL4 and LL5. The Neighbourhood Plan takes a brownfield first approach to development and within these areas identifies locations where new homes may form part of the land use mix, including at Land South of the High Street and a mixture of residential opportunities, including a care home, at Bridge Meadow. These spaces are also key to providing key local services.

3.6 The town centre is well connected with good vehicular and public transport links. Leighton Buzzard railway station is within Linslade and a 15-minute walk away from Leighton Buzzard High Street. The train line has direct connections to London (27 minutes to Euston.)

3.7 The A4146 and A505 wrap around the west and south of the Neighbourhood Area and provide connections north to Milton Keynes and east to Luton, and the major road A5. The main vehicular route through the town centre east-west is formed by the A4012, Leston Road, West Street, Leighton Road, Old Road and Soulbury Road. This road also connects Leighton Buzzard and Linslade over the Grand Union Canal and the River Ouzel. Both the Canal and the River Ouzel pass north-south through the town centre, running parallel to each other.

3.8 Leighton Buzzard Town Centre serves as the main retail area with retail and other mixed uses concentrated along its High Street. Linslade serves as a secondary centre with some retail offerings, though significantly smaller than Leighton Buzzard town centre and with more of a residential focus.

Policy LL2: LEIGHTON BUZZARD TOWN CENTRE

The Neighbourhood Plan defines Leighton Buzzard Town Centre "Cluster One", as shown on the Policies Map, for the purpose of managing proposals for retail, leisure, commercial, residential and other forms of development. All development proposals should demonstrate how they have responded to the objectives for Cluster One in the Wider Town Centre Spatial Framework (Appendix A) In addition:

A. All proposals should retain or create, where appropriate to the use, an active street frontage and should seek to enhance the public realm through street planting and other measures intended to enhance the vitality of the Town Centre and to increase footfall.

B. Within the Primary Shopping Area, where change of use is required, proposals for new community and social infrastructure uses, including health and wellbeing and cultural uses defined under class F1, F2(b) and appropriate Sui Generis* uses will be supported on both ground and upper floors where it can be demonstrated that the use of the building(s) will contribute to vitality of the town centre by extending the range of facilities offered and/or stimulating activity for the evening economy.

C. All proposals for development within the Conservation Area including a change of use, must demonstrate how they preserve or enhance its character or appearance.

D. Proposals that prioritise heritage led placemaking, sensitively reusing and adapting historic spaces whilst preserving their heritage features through refurbishment (rather than demolition) will be encouraged.

E. Residential development at ground floor level will only be supported outside of the Primary Shopping Area. Such proposals must demonstrate a high level of accessibility, including direct links to active travel routes, public transport and existing or new local green spaces.

F. Proposals for new and altered shopfronts should avoid use of uPVC shopfronts, oversized signage, and poorly proportioned modern interventions which detract from the town's historic character.

G. Proposals for partial pedestrianisation or measures to restrict traffic movements at identified times which encourage people to move safely and freely around the Town Centre will be supported.

**** Appropriate Sui Generis uses to support the Town Centre and the evening economy are defined as those specifically identified in Article 3(6) of The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987: (a) theatre, (l) nightclub, (p) public house, wine bar, or drinking establishment, (q) drinking establishment with expanded food provision, (r) hot food takeaway, (s) live music performance venue, (t) cinema, (u) concert hall, (v) bingo hall and (x) dance hall.***

3.9 The Leighton Linslade Neighbourhood Plan Vision is for:

"A 21st century market town that thrives on the strength of its heritage, community, environment and entrepreneurs/creatives".

3.10 The Town Council will support this vision in the Town Centre by:

- Promoting a Town Centre where people want to spend time, that promotes local entrepreneurs and small businesses and is anchored by a popular market.
- Supporting the creation of spaces that empower local groups and entrepreneurs that bring our community together and enable the local services that local people need.
- Improving and incorporating blue and green spaces that will provide easy access for residents to enjoy the local countryside and improve health and wellbeing.
- Ensuring that provision of homes in the future all meet the Healthy Homes standards.
- Enabling local enterprises, entrepreneurs and creatives to deliver jobs, culture, community life and contribute to the vitality and viability of the town
- Supporting the protection and conservation of its heritage and history.
- Within the Primary Shopping Area, welcoming experiential businesses which provide engaging and interactive opportunities for visitors, particularly where they promote the evening economy.

3.11 Leighton Buzzard has evolved from a traditional market town to a 21st century modern town centre, with a mix of residential, retail and community uses. The town retains many historic buildings with strong links to its heritage, as well as the market tradition with markets taking place on Tuesdays and Saturdays on the High Street. Recent vacancy data indicates the retail offer remains strong and resilient in the face of challenging conditions. Like many town centres, Leighton Buzzard has faced pressures from out-of-town and online shopping, but has maintained an active town centre, with many small independent businesses. A regular calendar of events in the town centre sees the high street and local park used regularly to attract large numbers of people into the town centre.

3.12 With Town Centres adapting and changing, the policy seeks to ensure the land use mix in Leighton Buzzard is both respectful of its heritage as a traditional market town but flexible enough to respond to the functional requirements of the town centre of today, where visitors seek experience alongside traditional shopping opportunities. The Town Centre needs to be highly accessible to serve the growing population as well as providing a more community-based experience, using landmark locations and public realm spaces alongside new development to draw people in, attracted to the social and cultural infrastructure it can provide as well as promoting creative and incubation spaces to nurture new talent and independent businesses.

3.13 Leighton Buzzard Town Centre already plays an important and evolving role as a focus for cultural and creative activity within the parish. This is evidenced by the work of organisations such as Culture Co:LB, a place-based partnership established to champion culture as a driver of regeneration, wellbeing and economic vitality in Leighton Buzzard.

3.14 They describe Leighton Buzzard as a town with a growing creative ecology, encompassing artists, makers, performers, community groups, heritage organisations and creative businesses. Its work is founded on the principle that culture should be embedded

in everyday places and experiences, rather than confined to single venues, and that town centres are uniquely placed to support this role. The partnership promotes collaboration across sectors including arts, heritage, health, education and enterprise, positioning creativity as an integral component of a thriving town centre.

3.15 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to support and strengthen these aspirations by ensuring that planning decisions within the Town Centre enable cultural uses to come forward alongside retail, leisure and residential activity.

3.16 By supporting cultural and creative uses within the Town Centre, the policy aligns with the wider vision of Leighton Buzzard as a 21st-century market town that builds on its heritage while nurturing local talent, encouraging participation, supporting local enterprise and reinforcing a strong sense of place. Cultural activity is therefore recognised not as an ancillary use, but as a key contributor to town centre vitality, community cohesion and long-term resilience.

3.17 In support of this policy, applicants should take account of the CBC Design Guide SPD (2023), which also contains guidance on shop fronts, and the CBC Parking Standards SPD (2023), which sets out the appropriate level of vehicle and cycle parking within new development, including in town centre locations.

3.18 For the avoidance of doubt, the CBC Design Guide and Parking Standards have been formally adopted by Central Bedfordshire Council as Supplementary Planning Documents and apply across the whole of the Neighbourhood Area, not only the town centre. They do not form part of the development plan, but provide more detailed guidance on the application of Local Plan policies and are material considerations in the determination of planning applications. The purpose of the Wider Town Centre Spatial Framework (Appendix A) is to supplement and inform Policies LL1 to LL4 and it should be treated, in effect, as local design guidance which is also a material consideration. These documents are guidance rather than policy: applicants are not expected to demonstrate “compliance” with them, but should show that proper account has been taken of them in the design of their proposals. Planning applications will be determined against the policies of the development plan, including this Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy LL3: BRIDGE MEADOW/CANAL QUARTER

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies Bridge Meadow/Canal Quarter, as shown on the Policies Map, for the purpose of managing proposals for retail, leisure, commercial, housing and other forms of development. Development and redevelopment proposals should demonstrate how they have responded to the principles set out in the Leighton Linslade Wider Town Centre Spatial Framework (Appendix A) as they relate to Bridge Meadow/Canal Quarter (Cluster Three)

A. For the area to the south of Leighton Road, a comprehensive site redevelopment masterplan is encouraged. Proposals which demonstrate an integrated mix of uses in this location, to benefit the local community will be supported. This may include leisure or sports facilities, a care home or health hub. Uses across the site which are not heavily car dominated will also be supported as will proposals which seek to promote the waterside setting through the inclusion of the provision of a food and drink offer, such as family style pub, café or restaurant.

B. Residential development throughout the Bridge Meadow/Canal Quarter should be designed with properties fronting onto the river or the canal to capitalise on this attractive location whilst safeguarding access to the towpath, improving permeability and preserving the openness of the setting. As such, building heights at Bridge Meadow/ Canal Quarter should not exceed four storeys.

C. Due to flood risk, the south-east area of the land south of Leighton Road must be preserved as green infrastructure, complementing the enhancement of the River Ouzel. All other development on the site should be responsive to flood risk and allow for the areas potential to flood. This must include appropriate mitigation measures for development and to prevent pollution of the river as well opportunities to reduce the existing surface flood risk on site, to store flood water and help reduce flood risk elsewhere.

D. Any development within Bridge Meadow/Canal Quarter must demonstrate how it protects and enhances both the river and canal corridors including access routes, as part of a wider Green & Blue Infrastructure network, in a safe and attractive setting.

E. All proposals should:

   i. respond positively to the waterside setting of the immediate area in their design and layout,

   ii. enhance the waterways of river Ouzel and Grand Union Canal as community and biodiversity assets,

   iii. maximise opportunities to strengthen active travel connections between Leighton Buzzard and Linslade including routes alongside and over the canal and river, including proposed Green Wheel routes, links identified in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans and improving access to the Town Centre and to local green spaces, and facilitate bus or Digital Demand Responsive Travel use into and through the area.

iv. **respond to and enhance the heritage of the area, with careful consideration of local architectural styles, building forms and taking the opportunity to promote the history of the canal in this area.**

3.19 This policy covers the areas north and south of Leighton Road bounded to the east and west by the Grand Union Canal and the River Ouzel, around 700m to the east of Leighton Buzzard Railway Station.

3.20 Whilst it is expected that proposals to the north of Leighton Road may come forward piecemeal, over the longer term as changes of use come forward in response to changes in shopping habits and/or big box retail provision, the land to the south of Leighton Road (known as Bridge Meadow) has long been envisaged as a comprehensive scheme (see CBC Land at Bridge Meadow Development Brief 2012)

3.21 The waterside setting has been considered as lacking the profile it deserves. The Grand Union Canal, which links London to Birmingham, and is the longest canal in the country, is well used and supported as a recreational feature through the town but could be better showcased and celebrated, both for its biodiversity and in recognition of its part of the heritage of the town as part of the natural environment as well as its role within the built environment.

3.22 The Development Brief has been used to inform the identification of three areas at Bridge Meadow, to the South of Leighton Road, as follows:

Area 1 – Commercial, Retail, and Waterside: This area features Lombard House, a four-storey office building with car parking, a Victorian paint shop building, and Grade II Listed Grand Union House along Leighton Road. A two-storey brick building and open storage space are located at the rear. The land has several freehold and leasehold interests.

Area 2 – Jewsons and Retail Area: This area includes buildings along Leighton Road, such as a gym, a Jewsons retail/ trade counter, a petrol station, and a GP surgery alongside single and two-storey industrial units. The rear of the area is occupied by Jewsons, with additional industrial sheds and hardstanding space.

Area 3 – Residential and Storage: currently occupied, this land contains mobile homes and storage for fairground vehicles. There are also several sheds, with the southern part overgrown with vegetation.

3.23 The land immediately adjacent to these areas is owned by the Greensand Trust. Developers are encouraged to engage with the Greensand Trust to discuss the opportunities for use of this land to enhance the Green and Blue Infrastructure network locally as part of their proposals, including potential Biodiversity Net Gain proposals.

3.24 The area to the southeast of Bridge Meadow is prone to flooding, which the policy addresses. Given the concerns expressed by the community to the flood risk on site, it is recommended that any development proposals include visible flood mitigation measures.

3.25 In addition, land at Bridge Meadow/Canal Quarter lies close to a primary river upstream of the Nares Gladley Marsh Site of Special Scientific Interest. As such this SSSI is highly sensitive to water quality changes and water quantity changes. Development proposals

shall demonstrate compliance with Central Bedfordshire Local Plan water-quality policies, the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and other pollution-prevention measures and adherence to Environment Agency guidance requiring minimum 8m buffer from flood defences or embankments.

Policy LL4: LINSLADE CLUSTER

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies Linslade, between the Grand Union Canal and Leighton Buzzard Railway Station, as shown on the Policies Map for the purpose of managing proposals for retail, leisure, commercial and housing. Proposals which deliver the objectives of the Wider Town Centre Spatial Framework (Appendix A) as they relate to Linslade (Cluster Two) will be supported. These are:

A. A new multi-modal hub and improved public realm at Leighton Buzzard railway station to include mixed travel uses. This should include a bus stop/interchange, cycle storage, e-bike hire, e-car sharing/ car club space, additional seating and shelters to facilitate onwards active travel, enhance passenger comfort and encourage use of the railway over car use.

B. In the "Mixed-use Focus Area", as shown on the Policies Map, development which strengthens and reinforces the function of the local centre, including the creation of new retail or community facilities. Change of use to residential at ground floor level will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that it would not be result in an erosion of the function of the Linslade local centre.

C. New secure cycle parking, walking and cycling routes around the Heritage Focus Area, (located within the conservation area and the setting of the listed building cluster around St Barnabas Church,) which enable better access to the Station, St Barnabas Church and Linslade Recreation Ground will be supported where proposals demonstrate how they preserve local character and heritage in their design and layout.

3.26 Linslade is in the west of the Wider Town Centre Spatial Framework study area, beyond the Grand Union Canal. The area rapidly developed in the early part of the nineteenth century after the opening of the canal in 1805 and then the railway line in 1838. It was initially known as Chelsea New Town or New Linslade (the original village, Old Linslade was a mile to the north.)

3.27 This area has a mixture of uses with a small number of cafes, restaurants and take-aways as well as a few businesses. The centre is less defined than Leighton Buzzard and the area has a predominantly residential feel with community and recreational facilities including Linslade Recreation Ground and Mentmore Road Memorial Playing Field and Gardens. Linslade is an important area in terms of connections and active travel given the railway station is located in this area. It is important to maintain and improve Linslade's character in its own right, as well as strengthening connections with Leighton Buzzard town centre and make sure these two areas complement each other with the uses and spaces they offer.

3.28 Policy LL4 is framed as a principles-based policy, setting out broad development principles that would be supported. The pre-submission version of the Plan included support for enabling residential development in the area around the station. However, in view of draft NPPF, this policy has been removed given the likelihood of a permanent

presumption for residential development in this area. As such, the remaining policy wording supports the draft NPPF emphasis on embedding transport sustainability into both plan-making and development assessment by taking a vision-led approach to transport (TR1), with sustainable transport considered from the earliest stages of planning to support walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport, and aligning land-use with transport infrastructure. LL4's principles promoting active travel infrastructure, integration with public transport, cycle routes and pedestrian links directly reinforce these objectives by expressing local policy expectations for sustainable movement patterns, reduced car dependency and enabling better multimodal transport.

Policy LL5: LAND SOUTH OF THE HIGH STREET

1. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies Land South of the High Street, as shown on the Policies Map, as an opportunity for regeneration within the town centre. Proposals will be supported where they deliver a high-quality, mixed-use development. This may include residential, retail, community, cultural, leisure or employment uses appropriate to this location.
2. Proposals should demonstrate regard to the Land South of High Street Spatial Framework as an expression of community aspiration.
3. In applying the National Decision-Making Policy DP3 on key principles for well-designed places, development proposals should respond to their context as follows:

    A. Be heritage-led in approach, conserving and enhancing the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets, including the setting of listed buildings and the character and appearance of the Leighton Buzzard Conservation Area.

    B. Respond positively to the site's town centre context, including scale, massing and layout including historic plot patterns, scale, massing and ridge lines and preserving key views and visual connections.

    C. Where economically viable, retain and reuse existing buildings which conserve heritage significance and contribute positively to the character of the area.

    Where appropriate to the circumstances, the following broad design objectives should be borne in mind:

    D. Improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity within and around the site, including opportunities to enhance links between the High Street and Parsons Close Recreation Ground to enhance east-west movement and accessibility, where feasible and deliverable, with access arrangements informed by proportionate transport assessment.

    E. Apply a vision-led approach to transport, providing genuine alternatives to car ownership for future residents and visitors.

    F. Provide high quality cycle parking and active travel infrastructure.

    G. Demonstrate safe and convenient access to public transport.

    H. Design streets and spaces to reduce reliance on private car use.

    I. Provide town centre public parking where required to support the vitality and viability of the High Street and market function. Residential parking provision should reflect the highly accessible location.

    J. Protect and enhance water quality within the River Ouzel catchment, in accordance with relevant Local Plan and Environment Agency requirements, including buffer zones and pollution prevention measures.

K. Integrate high-quality green infrastructure within the layout, including connectivity with the wider Leighton Linslade Green and Blue Infrastructure Network.

4. Proposals which seek to provide any of the key community infrastructure identified in Policy LL11 (Infrastructure Priorities) either as a standalone proposal or as part of comprehensive redevelopment of the site, will be supported, where justified by proportionate evidence.

3.29 The Land South of the High Street site was identified in 2012 as a once in a lifetime opportunity to create a significant, positive addition to the town centre. Central Bedfordshire Council are the majority landowner for the site. They created a Development Brief in 2012 which sought to: "create a sustainable extension to the town centre shopping area which enhances the retail offer and the centre's competitiveness, while preserving the town centre's existing high-quality character, reinforcing its distinctiveness and enhancing the town's historic character and environment."

3.30 The site has historical significance of its own with gardens established by Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild in the late 19th Century and a World War Two telephone exchange linked to the RAF's radar network and Bletchley Park. There are parts of both the Rothschild Stables and the telephone exchange building still present on the site.

3.31 Over the following decade there was very little progress in respect of bringing this vision forward; the Town Council created a re-worked masterplan in 2023 to stimulate interest in the site following several years of engagement and working parties involving the Town Council and CBC which had failed to progress the redevelopment of the area.

3.32 In early 2024 Central Bedfordshire Council decided to market the land in their ownership for residential use, with the potential for two parcels of land to be set aside for community use. The site was subsequently withdrawn from sale with no further activity to date.

3.33 The Neighbourhood Plan has therefore taken the opportunity to review the original 2012 Development Brief and the 2023 Town Council reworked masterplan to create a spatial framework for the site, prepared by AECOM which accompanies this Neighbourhood Plan. This spatial framework has also been subject to a high-level viability testing to inform the policy development.

3.34 The Land South of High Street Spatial Framework (Appendix B) and the Wider Town Centre Spatial Framework (Appendix A) were both prepared by AECOM to inform the policies of this Neighbourhood Plan. Neither spatial framework is formal planning policy and neither forms part of the development plan. They are advisory documents which set out the community's aspirations for these areas and should be treated, in effect, as local design guidance. As such they are capable of being a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, and applicants are expected to show that they have had regard to them, but they do not in themselves impose requirements on development proposals.

3.35 The viability assessment was prepared as part of a funded package of technical support to assist the Steering Group in determining whether there is a robust and proportionate evidence base to support the inclusion of this site as an allocation within the Neighbourhood Plan. The work is high-level in nature and is intended to inform plan-making, rather than to present a detailed or fully deliverable scheme. In particular, it is relevant to demonstrating that the Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development, having regard to national policy, and that it is supported by appropriate and proportionate evidence.

3.36 Its outputs demonstrated that there could be a potentially viable scheme comprising of a mix of uses, principally residential, but including appropriate town centre and community uses. Whilst the assessment focused on market housing, there is nothing to stop a future developer seeking external funding, such as through the Social and Affordable Homes Programme or other government programmes, to support the delivery of affordable housing through gap funding, to assist with scheme viability and delivery, which can be problematic on more challenging brownfield sites such as this.

3.37 Given the longstanding concern that this site, a logical brownfield redevelopment opportunity in a highly sustainable and accessible town centre location, has not come forward, the Neighbourhood Plan has sought to positively address this through the exploration of realistic and deliverable mechanisms to facilitate its regeneration. Notwithstanding these efforts, repeated attempts by the qualifying body to engage directly with Central Bedfordshire Council in advance of the Regulation 14 stage were unsuccessful, evidenced through the accompanying Consultation Statement.

3.38 The Pre-submission version of the Plan did proceed to propose this policy as a site allocation for up to 151 homes with community and town centre uses, using the Regulation 14 process seek a meaningful response from CBC in its role as the landowner. It also used this process to seek buy-in from the community that, notwithstanding the long-held aspiration to see the site transformed as a community and cultural hub for the Town, the commercial reality is that the site needs to include a significant level of residential development to enable that vision to be realised, borne out by the viability work. Whilst a small number of respondents to the Regulation 14 did raise concern there appeared to be an overall acceptance for a residential led mixed use scheme. The trade-off for this acceptance being that re-development of the site would include some suitable space(s) for community and cultural uses as well as commercial spaces suitable for local small businesses at affordable rents and a similar amount of public parking provision as is currently required, unless this can be appropriately re-provided elsewhere within the town centre.

3.39 CBC, in their role as landowner, through their appointed consultants responded to the Regulation 14 and did not agree with the allocation of the site in this way, considering it to be overly prescriptive. A meeting was requested following the conclusion of the Regulation 14 to resolve the objection but was not forthcoming. As such, in order to move the neighbourhood plan forward, a revised policy wording, removing the allocation but retaining the desired site-specific development principles was sent to CBCs consultants for review. This also returned an objection (set out in the Consultation Statement.) The Steering Group reviewed the objection and considered any further proposed changes to

the wording to accommodate their concern as the land interest, resulting in Policy LL5 as presented.

Policy LL6: HOUSING MIX AND TYPE

A. As required by Local Plan Policy H1, proposals for residential development consisting of 10 or more dwellings, or on sites of 0.5 hectares or more will normally be expected to provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes to address the nature of local needs and contribute to the objective of creating a mixed and balanced community.

B. In order to achieve adaptable and accessible homes, proposals will normally be required to comply with the standards laid down in Local Plan Policy H2.

3.40 There has been significant development in Leighton Linslade in recent years with just under 3,000 new homes built since 2011. The Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) (March 2025) identifies that Leighton Linslade's existing housing stock is dominated by larger dwellings, with 3-bedroom homes forming the largest single proportion (41%), followed by 2-bedroom homes (28%), while 1-bedroom dwellings account for a much smaller share (8%).

3.41 Over the last decade, there has been a disproportionate increase in the delivery of larger 4-bedroom and above homes, resulting in a gradual skew of the overall housing stock towards larger units. The HNA concludes that future residential development should play a role in rebalancing this trend by delivering more smaller and medium-sized homes, particularly 2- and 3-bedroom dwellings, to better align with current and future household needs. Clause A of the policy reflects Local Plan Policy H1 (Housing Mix), which seeks to ensure that new development delivers an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes to meet identified local needs.

3.42 The HNA also highlights changing demographic patterns within Leighton Linslade, including an ageing population alongside continued demand from working-age households and those seeking to access the housing market for the first time. Increasing the supply of smaller and medium-sized homes can support first-time buyers, renters and downsizers, improve affordability, and enable households to move within the parish as their housing needs change, thereby making more efficient use of the existing housing stock. This evidence of local need should inform the mix of dwelling types and sizes provided by residential schemes under Clause A, ensuring that new housing contributes positively to the creation of mixed, inclusive and sustainable communities in Leighton Linslade.

3.43 The Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) (March 2025) also identifies a clear and accelerating ageing trend within Leighton Linslade's existing population. The most significant population growth since 2011 has occurred within the 65–84 age group (+38%) and those aged 85 and over (+29%), with projections indicating the formation of approximately 2,147 additional households headed by people aged 75 and over during the Neighbourhood Plan period. The HNA concludes that while there is demand for market sheltered accommodation, a substantial proportion of older households' needs can be met through the provision of mainstream housing that is accessible and adaptable,

allowing residents to remain in their homes as their mobility and support needs change over time.

3.44 Clause B recognises that with an ageing population, the provision of accessible and adaptable dwellings can reduce the requirement for age restricted housing. By applying the standards set out in Local Plan Policy H2, new homes will provide options for residents to remain in their home in later years, rather than moving out into care facilities, helping to maintain a balanced mix of demographics within any given neighbourhood.

3.45 This approach therefore supports the efficient use of land and housing stock, reduces pressure for age-restricted or specialist accommodation, and promotes inclusive communities that enable people to age in place. By embedding accessibility into mainstream housing, Clause B helps ensure that new development contributes positively to long-term housing resilience and the creation of balanced and sustainable neighbourhoods within Leighton Linslade.

Policy LL7: LOCAL COMMUNITY ASSETS

A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies existing community facilities, as listed below, shown on the Policies Map and detailed in Appendix C for the purpose of applying the National Decision-Making Policies HC4 and HC6 on proposals for the retention and improvement of key community facilities and public service infrastructure.

a) Leighton Buzzard Day Centre

b) Linslade Community Hall

c) Forster Institute

d) Gables Masonic Hall

e) The Recreation Rooms

f) Linslade Memorial Pavilion and Playing Fields

g) Community Hall, Hornbeam Close.

h) Meadow Way Community Association

i) Astral Park Community Centre

j) Pages Park Pavilion

k) Brooklands Club

l) Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre

m) Tactic Centre

n) Youth Club (adjacent to Gilbert Inglefield Academy)

o) Childrens Centre

p) Leighton Buzzard Library

q) Riverside Centre

B. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the designated Asset of Community Value (ACV) at Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre. Re-development within the existing use class E(d) or re-purposing of this building for appropriate use class F1 and/or use class F2 uses will be supported to ensure the continued use of this existing community facility, following the opening of the new Leisure Centre in Leighton Buzzard.

C. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the following educational establishments, shown on the Policies Map, as public service infrastructure for the purpose of applying National Decision-Making Policies HC6 and HC7:

1. Southcott Lower School
2. Linslade Lower School
3. Linslade Middle School
4. Cedars Upper School
5. Vandyke Upper School
6. Brooklands Middle School

7. **Leighton Middle School**
8. **Pulford Lower School**
9. **Leedon Lower School**
10. **Beaudesert Lower School**
11. **Greenleas Lower School**
12. **Mary Bassett Lower School**
13. **Rushmere Park Academy**
14. **Gilbert Inglefield Academy**
15. **Clipstone Brook Lower**
16. **Dovery Academy**
17. **Oak Bank School**
18. **Greenleas School on Kestrel Way**
19. **Central Beds College on Chartmoor Road**
20. **Heathwood Lower School on Heath Road**

3.46 Leighton Linslade has a relatively small number of community facilities for a large market town and as such the Neighbourhood Plan promotes the creation of new facilities where there is opportunity to do so. As a result of the relative lack of assets, it is vital that the existing facilities are protected for local people for community uses. Some spaces serve a very local catchment, such as Meadow Way Community Association; others such as the Children's Centre and Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre, serve the wider town. Appendix C provides further details on each of the venues in Clause A, explaining why they play such a vital role in the social infrastructure of the town.

3.47 The Classes E and F uses were introduced by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020, which amended the 1987 Order. Use Class E covers a wide range of commercial, business and service uses. Class E(d) is specifically related to indoor sport, recreation and fitness. Use Class F is split into F1 (learning and non-residential institutions) and F2 (local community). F1 includes uses like schools, libraries, museums, art galleries, places of worship, and law courts. F2 includes community halls, outdoor sports areas, and swimming pools or skating rinks.

3.48 Clause C identifies the schools and college within the Neighbourhood Area as public service infrastructure. This ensures that proposals affecting these establishments, including proposals for an alternative use should a site no longer be required for educational purposes, are considered against the same national policy approach as the other community facilities identified in this policy.

Policy LL8: GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the Bedfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy Network and the Leighton Linslade Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan (GBI) (Appendix E) for the purposes of applying National Decision-Making Policy N2 on using green infrastructure to secure multiple benefits and minimise impacts on biodiversity. This GBI Plan provides additional local detail to help inform delivery of the priorities identified within the Bedfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (published December 2025)

A. Development proposals that lie within or adjoining identified locations in the Leighton Linslade Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan are required to have full regard to creating, maintaining and improving the functionality of those locations in the design of their layouts, landscaping schemes and public open space provisions.

B. Where statutory BNG is required, every effort should be made to deliver this on-site. Where this is not possible, off-site biodiversity gains should be delivered as close to the development site as possible.

C. Proposals for new development requiring the provision of on-site open space will be supported where the design of open space is integral to the scheme and is effectively connected to any adjoining green infrastructure assets. Proposals within built up and previously developed areas of Leighton Linslade will be required, wherever possible, to create new natural green spaces within their schemes, providing benefits for wildlife and people, particularly where there are existing greenspace deficits. Where appropriate, developers will be expected to enter into a planning obligation to secure satisfactory arrangements for the long-term management of such open spaces.

D. The Leighton Linslade Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan identifies Strategic Landscape Opportunity Areas, Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, Historic Environment Opportunities, Blue Infrastructure Opportunities and GBI priority projects which will be supported.

3.49 The Network has been produced and mapped by Bedfordshire and Luton Biodiversity Recording and Monitoring Centre (BRMC), the Greensand Trust and Natural England. It illustrates existing biodiversity interest and opportunities where biodiversity enhancement would make the greatest, most effective contribution to nature recovery over the next 5-10 years, in line with Bedfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy and local aspirations. This takes account of the section 104 of the Environment Act 2021 that relates to all or part of the neighbourhood plan area.

3.50 Green and Blue Infrastructure is a term that covers a wide range of ecological and often biodiverse features. The Network comprises assets of high nature conservation value including rare and threatened heathland habitats, wildflower rich meadows, ancient semi-natural and secondary woodland, trees, hedgerows and water bodies - all assets of high biodiversity value. Also included are those areas of recreation and amenity value including children's play areas and play spaces, allotments, recreational playing fields,

and off street footways and cycleways in and around Leighton Linslade. In most cases assets have multi-functional, nature conservation, recreational and amenity value.

3.51 In areas such as Leighton Linslade, mapping this rich ecological value, does not just illustrate where they are currently located, but also points to where the network may be improved to be better connected if or when land is developed or redeveloped.

3.52 Green and blue infrastructure perform a vital public health function alongside their environmental role. They provide accessible places for everyday physical activity, informal recreation and active travel, helping to reduce sedentary behaviour and support cardiovascular health across all age groups. Equally important are their benefits for mental health and wellbeing: access to nature has been shown to reduce stress, anxiety and social isolation, improve mood and support cognitive development in children and young people. Blue infrastructure, including rivers, canals and wetlands, contributes to these outcomes while also playing a preventative health role through cooling urban areas, improving air quality and managing flood risk, thereby reducing heat-related illness and wider environmental health impacts.

3.53 Developers are recommended to utilise the Natural England Green Infrastructure Framework (GIF) in preparation of proposals and incorporate use of GI standards within design codes.

3.54 It is noted that the Neighbourhood Plan does not set biodiversity targets as this is a function of the Bedfordshire Natural Recovery Strategy but it is noted that the LNRS recognises that Bedfordshire is one of the most nature depleted counties in the UK.

3.55 In addition to the projects detailed in the policy, the Neighbourhood Plan highlights the following wider Green and Blue Infrastructure recommendations:

- Continue to work with CBC to develop and expand road verge management that supports biodiversity, with ‘cut and collect’ regimes timed to benefit appropriate flowering species.
- Encourage tree and woodland creation and hedgerow planting where this enhances connectivity and buffering of existing woodlands and does not compromise other habitat objectives.
- The encouragement of BNG registration of land within the parish by a range of partners and landowners, ensuring that locally suitable and beneficial options for BNG receptor sites are available to developers.
- Targeted control of invasive non-native species where these are having an impact on local biodiversity.
- Work with the Environment Agency, IDB, UBOCP and others (including adjacent parishes) to target Natural Flood Management delivery where it will have the greatest impact in flood risk reduction, while also delivering benefits for nature.
- Ensure any new infrastructure created to reduce flood risk in the parish (including any new reservoirs) delivers multiple benefits for biodiversity, access and recreation.
- Continue to support local ‘Citizen Science’ activity which contributes knowledge of the GBI network, identifies issues and monitors species, habitats and projects

3.56 In respect of Clause B, Leighton Linslade Town Council is working with the Greensand Trust and the wider community to undertake a parish wide biodiversity and ecology survey of around 20 sites between April-September this year. After the survey window closes in September the results will be analysed and a more detailed biodiversity action plan with recommendations will put forward to committee/council with a view to identifying more local BNG opportunity sites as currently off-site credits are being used some distance outside of the parish.

Policy LL9: LOCAL GREEN SPACES

The Neighbourhood Plan designates as Local Green Spaces, the locations listed below, shown on the Policies Map and detailed in Appendix D, for the purpose of applying the National Decision-Making Policy HC8 on development affecting a Local Green Space:

a. Heath Wood
b. Heath Wood Meadow
c. Knolls Wood
d. Churchill Road Amenity Space
e. Nelson Road Play Area
f. Linslade Wood
g. Alwins Field Allotments
h. Derwent Road Recreation Space
i. Mentmore Road Memorial Playing Field and Gardens
j. Wyngates Allotments
k. Ledburn Quarry
l. Tiddenfoot Waterside Park
m. Rackley Hill Pit
n. Camberton Road Informal Recreation Space
o. Weston Avenue Playing Field
p. Weston Avenue Allotments
q. Pages Park Recreation Ground
r. Astral Park
s. Stanbridge Meadows
t. Danes Field
u. Vandyke Rd Recreation Ground
v. Field adjacent to Linslade Wood (off Stoke Road)
w. Amenity Space between Regents Street & Miles Ave
x. Meadow Way Recreation Ground
y. Alwins Field Recreation Ground
z. Chelsea Green
aa. Soulbury Road Verge Amenity Green Space
bb. Bideford Gardens Amenity Green Space
cc. Grasmere Park Amenity Green Space (west)
dd. Grasmere Park Amenity Green Space (east)

ee. Leeston Park Play Area

ff. Liddell Way Green Space

gg. Leighton Road/Meadow Way Amenity Green Space

hh. Adams Bottom Green Space

ii. Vandyke Loop Meadow

jj. Parson's Close Recreation Ground

kk. Linslade Recreation Ground

3.57 The Leighton Linslade Green and Blue Infrastructure Network includes some land that qualifies as a Local Green Space; this places play an important role in Leighton Linslade, helping to define the character of the area, as well as being an important social and environmental resource for the health and wellbeing of the community.

3.58 In 2012, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) introduced Local Green Space as a way for communities to identify green areas of particular importance and to provide special protection against development. They can only be designated through either Local or Neighbourhood plans. The principle of Local Green Space has remained unchanged in subsequent updates to the NPPF (including the draft 2025 consultation version) which states that policies for managing development within a LGS should be consistent with that for the Green Belt.

3.59 Jon Balaam of the Greensand Trust, as part of the Steering Group Task Team and appointed by the Town Council to develop the Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan, completed a two stage evaluation of candidate LGS sites. Stage I initial screening was completed prior to the informal engagement in March/April 2025, with Stage II being completed before the Pre-Submission Plan was approved for the Regulation 14 Consultation. A further review was undertaken in preparing the submission version of the Plan to revisit those sites where objection was raised. The approach taken is considered appropriate and proportionate.

3.60 These designations offer protection against development for community-valued green spaces which provide significant recreational, ecological, and aesthetic benefits.

3.61 Local Green Spaces, by virtue of their proximity and community value, are particularly important in ensuring that these health benefits are available equitably, including to those with limited mobility, lower incomes or without access to private gardens. Policy LL9 therefore support a preventative, place-based approach to public health by safeguarding Local Green Spaces as essential social infrastructure that underpins long-term physical, mental and environmental health outcomes for the community.

3.62 Each location has been justified using the National Planning Policy Framework criteria that the location shall be:

a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;

b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including

as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and

c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

3.63 The Planning Practice Guidance provides a helpful steer as to the considerations for Local Green Space identification. Green areas can include land where sports pavilions, boating lakes or structures such as war memorials are located, allotments, or urban spaces that provide a tranquil oasis. The proximity of a Local Green Space to the community it serves will depend on local circumstances, including why the green area is seen as special, but it must be reasonably close. For example, if public access is a key factor, then the site would normally be within easy walking distance of the community it serves. There are no hard and fast rules about how big a Local Green Space can be because places are different, and a degree of judgment will inevitably be needed. Because Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green area concerned is not an extensive tract of land, blanket designation of open countryside adjacent to settlements will not be appropriate. Finally, there is no requirement for the Local Green Space to have public access.

3.64 Full details of every location are set out in Appendix D to describe why each is special.

Policy LL10: ACTIVE & SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies an Active Travel Network as shown on the Policies Map for the purpose of applying the National Decision-Making Policies TR3 and TR8 on locating development in sustainable locations and on public rights of way respectively.

B. The Leighton Linslade Green Wheel identifies opportunities where public realm improvements are required to improve highway safety. Development which lies within or adjacent to areas identified within the Green Wheel must avoid measures which would adversely affect the ability to implement these proposals.

C. The Active Travel Network identifies opportunities where public realm improvements are required to enhance the walking, wheeling and cycling environment, improve residential amenity, improve connectivity between community and recreational facilities, schools and the railway station, improve highway safety and create new links into the town centre across the Grand Union Canal and the River Ouzel.

D. New developments should encourage the provision of conveniently located bus shelters, with seating and step-free access at boarding points. All major residential developments must, where appropriate, incorporate or fund measures that improve local bus services, including but not limited to, route extensions, frequency enhancements, flexible bus services (Demand Responsive Transport) or community transport services, in support of the Central Bedfordshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (2024 or subsequent edition), and safe, accessible walking routes around the development providing opportunities for rest and enabling access to the bus network.

3.65 This policy seeks to encourage safe, accessible and convenient means of walking, wheeling and cycling through the Town and improve access to and frequency of bus services accessing the Town Centre and from the surrounding residential area.

3.66 The Policies Map shows the full extent of the existing active travel network, including bus and rail routes, walking and cycling routes, the Leighton Linslade Green Wheel and public rights of way, which allows applicants to determine if their proposals should take this policy into account. Where proposals include provision for landscaping, new means of access or new layouts, there may be an opportunity to relate the land better to the Network and/or improve the attractiveness of rural routes. At the very least, the policy requires that proposals that will undermine the existing value of the Network will not be supported.

3.67 The opportunities for upgrading existing active travel routes to improve accessibility and other opportunity measures have been identified through early informal community engagement, from the recently published Leighton Linslade Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (2023) and from work undertaken by Buzz Cycles to identify opportunities to improve permeability across the east of the town, as well as routes

identified from the Wider Town Centre Spatial Masterplan, including an east/west bridge over the Grand Union Canal, to connect Linslade to Leighton Buzzard Town Centre.

3.68 It is noted that the Green Wheel opportunity routes are indicative. There should be a measure of flexibility where development proposals include land where the Green Wheel seeks to pass through, so the exact route can be determined during masterplanning to maximise accessibility without unnecessarily constraining site layout.

3.69 In respect of Clause D, Section 7.6 of the CBC Design Guide sets out public transport design principles and should be reviewed by applicants seeking to demonstrate appropriate provision.

Policy LL11: INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES

A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the following priorities to create additional social infrastructure within the town:

- **i. A new Neighbourhood Health Centre.**
- **ii. A multi-purpose indoor space that can host large-scale meetings and events.**
- **iii. An indoor exhibition space to display Leighton Buzzard's history.**
- **iv. A indoor space for creative and cultural activities.**
- **v. Additional outdoor and indoor sports courts/hall space.**

B. Proposals which result in the creation and development of such facilities will be supported where both the social infrastructure and any enabling development to facilitate its delivery, are in accordance with the other policies within the Neighbourhood Plan.

C. Where any social infrastructure facilities are proposed with the intention of being community owned and operated, these should be secured via legal agreement, including an option to transfer ownership of the facility to either the Town Council or other nominated community group upon completion.

D. The Neighbourhood Plan is particularly keen for the creation of such facilities where there is an opportunity to reuse or repurpose an existing building due to the reduced carbon emissions associated with construction and the preservation of any historical and cultural heritage associated with the premises.

3.70 To maintain Leighton Linslade as a sustainable community there is a need to provide the necessary infrastructure to support the local population and those who visit or work in the area. Infrastructure can take many forms, but a number of the early policy ideas put forward for the LLNP referenced social and community infrastructure improvements for the area, reflecting the responses to early engagement.

3.71 This policy brings into sharp focus the top infrastructure improvements required for the town, to specifically support their development and direct developer contributions towards their implementation to facilitate their delivery.

3.72 During informal engagement, the School Sports Partnership for the Leighton Linslade area detailed the fantastic support they receive from local sports clubs and local community organisations in hosting and providing opportunities for young people, especially around outdoor facilities such as Cricket, Hockey, Rugby, Football and Netball. However, they noted access to indoor Sports Facilities, especially during the daytime is lacking. Whilst they have excellent support from the local Middle and Upper Schools, there is no facility within the area that can accommodate other groups doing the likes of daytime Badminton, indoor walking sports (Football, Netball), Carpet Bowls, Disability Sports etc. Such a facility could also host Lower School games events indoors.

3.73 The need for indoor sports hall space is echoed by other clubs such as the Table Tennis Club, who are concerned that with the new Leisure Centre not having a Sports Hall, and with the future of Tiddenfoot (the current Leisure Centre,) uncertain, the town will need indoor courts, with dedicated space to accommodate badminton clubs, pickleball, table tennis, and padel etc. This is supported by the Tennis Club who have a need for indoor courts as well as at least 4 additional outdoor courts and Padel and Pickleball courts.

3.74 NHS Property Services have confirmed they support the principle of a new Neighbourhood Health Centre as there is a clear additional need for healthcare capacity within the Neighbourhood Plan area and in accordance with CBC Local Plan Policies HQ2 and HW3, will look to collaborate with service providers in partnership working to align health infrastructure delivery locally and strategically.

Policy LL12: ENERGY EFFICIENCY

A. All development, except householder applications, should be 'zero carbon ready' by design to minimise the amount of energy needed to heat and cool buildings through landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping. Consideration should be given to resource efficiency at the outset and whether existing buildings can be re-used as part of the scheme to capture their embodied carbon.

B. Proposals that voluntarily exceed the minimum standards required by national policy or building regulations, including through zero-carbon-ready development or recognised high-performance standards, such as PassivHaus or BREEAM "Excellent" or "Outstanding" will be supported.

C. For major development, applicants are strongly encouraged to submit a Whole Life Carbon Assessment (WLCA), alongside their Sustainability Statement, using a recognised methodology, to demonstrate actions taken to reduce embodied carbon resulting, have been maximised across the construction, operational and end-of-life stages of development, having regard to viability and proportionality.

3.75 The Town Council passed a Climate Emergency in 2021. Leighton Buzzard has two wind turbines and the Town was a leader in battery technology in 2014 with the Super Battery on South Street. The new Marigold House Care Home is one of the very few care homes in the UK to be Passive Haus. The town was a bee friendly town in 2013 and a case study for the National Pollinator Strategy in 2014, with Keep the Buzz in Leighton Buzzard awarded a "Bees Needs Award "from DEFRA in 2017. Dash Direct Bus service was an award-winning bus service in 2011 that cut traffic on southern Leighton Buzzard by 17% above the TRICS assessment.

3.76 The town was also part of a special project of Cycle Town 2009-2011. Leighton Linslade has always been a market town for food and has markets supplying local vegetables and farm produce. Local food shops such as the Refill Shop provide good quality very affordable local food without waste. Several shops in the town also provide refill facilities.

3.77 This policy looks to build on those successes in securing a low carbon future for the Town through the built environment, supporting the delivery of Central Bedfordshire Local Plan Policy CC1 by requiring applicants to demonstrate, through a Sustainability Statement, how climate change mitigation and adaptation have been embedded into the design of development in Leighton Linslade.

3.78 The Sustainability Statement is intended to be proportionate and should reflect the scale, type and location of development, extending the Local Plan requirement for the submission of this statement for major development.

3.79 Leighton Linslade includes a diverse range of development contexts, including historic townscape, waterside locations and higher-density town centre sites. Sustainability Statements should therefore demonstrate how proposals respond appropriately to local circumstances, including heritage sensitivity, flood risk, overheating and opportunities for

green and blue infrastructure. It is noted that the submission of a Sustainability Statement is currently mandatory in the Local Plan for major development.

3.80 The submission of a Whole Life Carbon Assessment (WLCA) for major development is encouraged to support a comprehensive understanding of carbon impacts over the lifetime of development. This will assist decision-makers in giving positive weight to proposals that demonstrate long-term carbon reduction and resource efficiency, where this does not undermine scheme viability. This is also encouraged in the draft Design and Placemaking PPG, currently out for consultation.

3.81 This policy does not introduce additional mandatory technical standards beyond those required by national policy or the development plan, but seeks to ensure that climate considerations are transparent, locally responsive and embedded in planning decisions.

3.82 In respect of Clause A of the policy, 'Zero Carbon Ready' by design means making spatial decisions on layout and orientation of buildings at the outset to maximise the passive design benefits ('free heat') of a site and avoids leaving this to technical choices and assessment at the Building Regulation stage, by which time the opportunity may have been lost. Applicants are directed to the Net-Zero Carbon Toolkit created by Cotswold District Council and two partner councils, WODC and Forest of Dean District Council. The toolkit is available as a resource for private and public sector organisations to use and adopt (link required).

3.83 Every new build or redevelopment project in the Neighbourhood Plan area provides an opportunity to make a difference and a contribution towards meeting our climate change targets for 2050. This new information requirement need not be an unreasonable expectation of even the smallest schemes for new buildings.

3.84 In respect of existing housing stock, with the National Energy Efficiency Centre based in Leighton Buzzard, there is an opportunity for the community and local groups such as South Bedfordshire Friends of the Earth and Buzz Community Energy, to come together to promote retrofitting for both insulation and renewable energy options as well as to realise the ambition to create a Local Area Energy Plan for the Town to seek how Leighton Buzzard could reduce its demand for electricity, the cost of local electricity and its carbon emissions.

3.85 It is noted that whilst many retrofitting measures do not require planning permission, for listed buildings or those within the conservation area consent is required. As such, applicants are recommended to review the Advice Note prepared by Historic England which is aimed *"to provide clarity and support consistent decision-making for proposals to reduce carbon emissions and improve the energy efficiency of historic buildings whilst conserving their significance and ensuring they remain viable places to live in the future."*

Leighton Linslade Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map

The interactive map, with functionality to isolate layers can be found at:
https://oneillhomer.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/interactivelegend/index.html?appid=b6e5f926aa044fc2a257eacd54f2f0c0

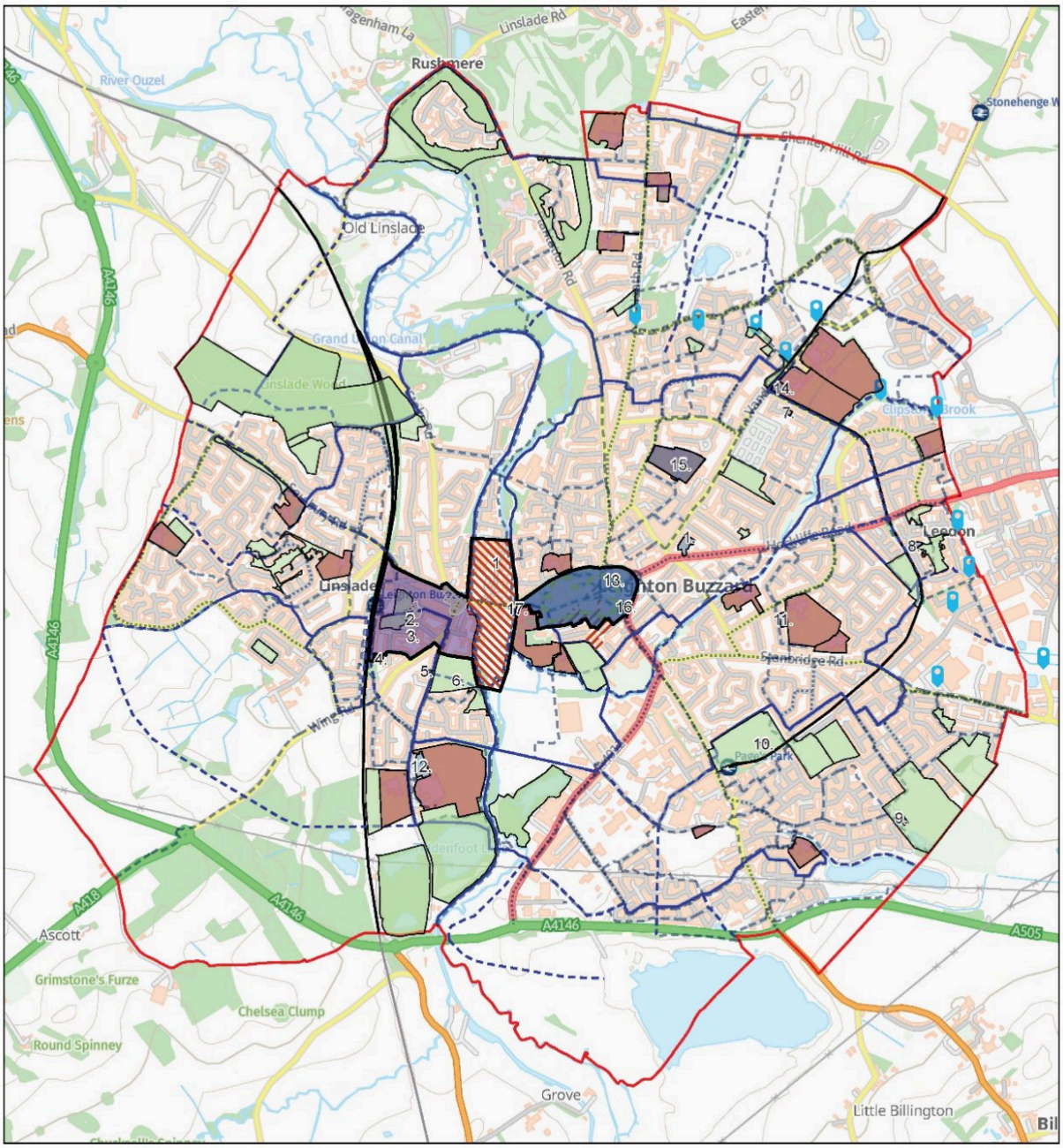
The maps on the following pages show where Policies LL1 to LL10 apply. The areas, sites and routes shown are described in the wording of each policy above, and the community facilities, schools and Local Green Spaces shown are listed in Policies LL7 and LL9. The interactive map above provides the same information with layers that can be switched on and off individually.

Key to the Policies Map and inset maps

- LL1 Centre of Town – thick black outline
- LL2 Town Centre – mid-blue shading
- LL2 Primary Shopping Area – yellow dashed outline
- LL3 Bridge Meadow/Canal Quarter – red-brown diagonal hatching
- LL4 Linslade Focus Areas – grey cross-hatching
- LL4 Linslade Cluster – purple shading
- LL5 Land South of High Street – orange diagonal hatching
- LL7 Community Facilities – light blue shading
- LL7 Education – mauve-brown shading
- LL9 Local Green Spaces – light green shading
- LL10 Buzz Cycles Eastern Opportunity Locations – blue location pins
- LL10 Green Wheel Improvements – dark blue dashed line
- LL10 Green Wheel – dark blue solid line
- LL10 LCWIP Routes – grey dashed line
- LL10 Bus Routes – grey dotted line
- LL10 Rail Line – black solid line
- Leighton Linslade Parish Boundary – red outline

Map date: 11/12/2026. Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2026. Contains data from OS Zoomstack.

Leighton Linslade Policy Map



11/12/2026

- LL1 Centre of Town
- LL2 Town Centre
- LL2 Primary Shopping Area
- LL3 Bridge Meadow/Canal Quarter
- LL4 Linslade Focus Areas
- LL4 Linslade Cluster
- LL5 Land South of High Street
- LL7 Community Facilities
- LL7 Education
- LL9 Local Green Spaces
- LL10 Buzz Cycles Eastern Opportunity Locations
- LL10 Green Wheel Improvements
- LL10 Green Wheel
- LL10 LCWIP Routes
- LL10 Bus Routes
- LL10 Rail Line
- Leighton Linslade Parish Boundary

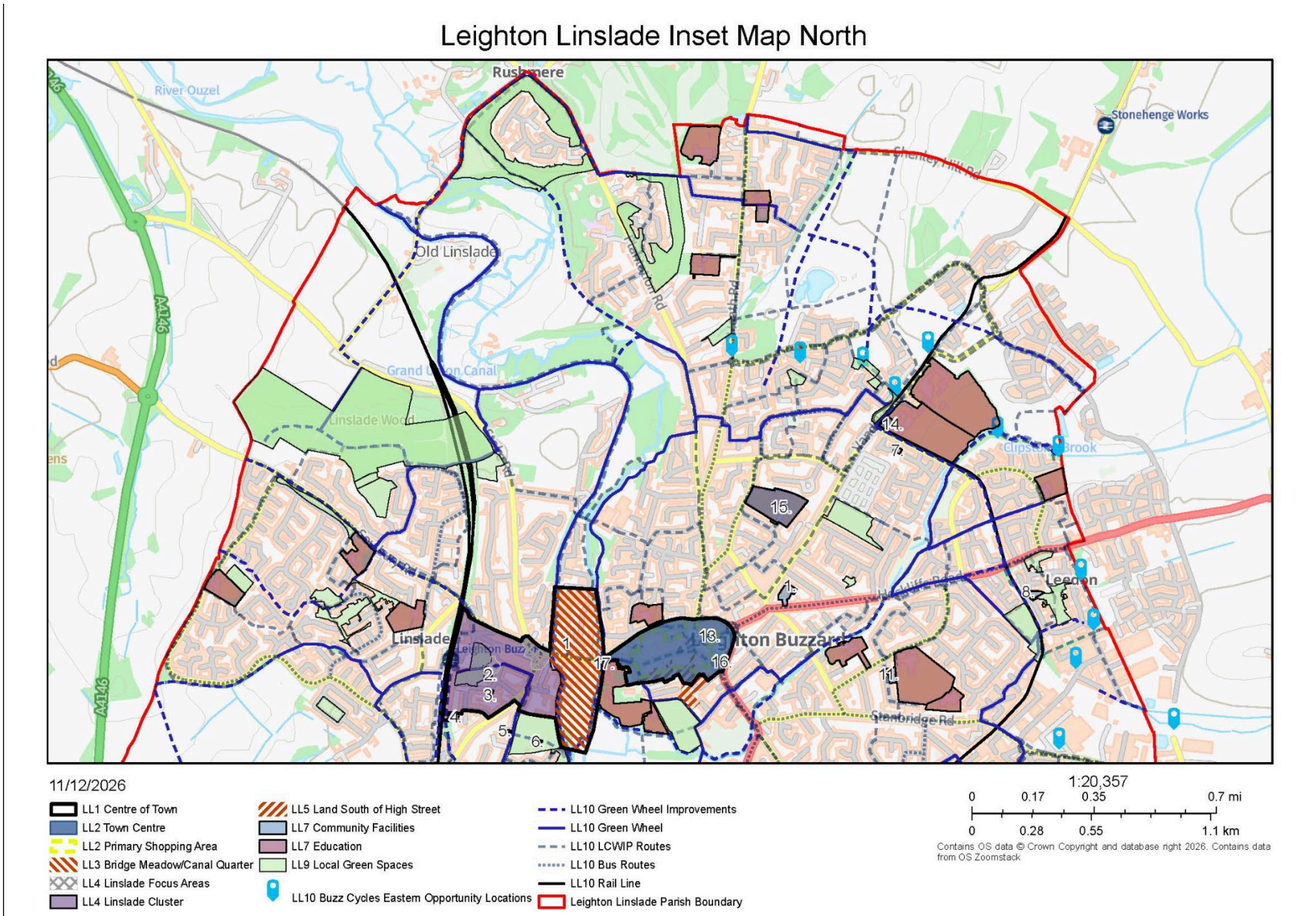
1:13,500 at A2

0 0.23 0.45 0.9 mi

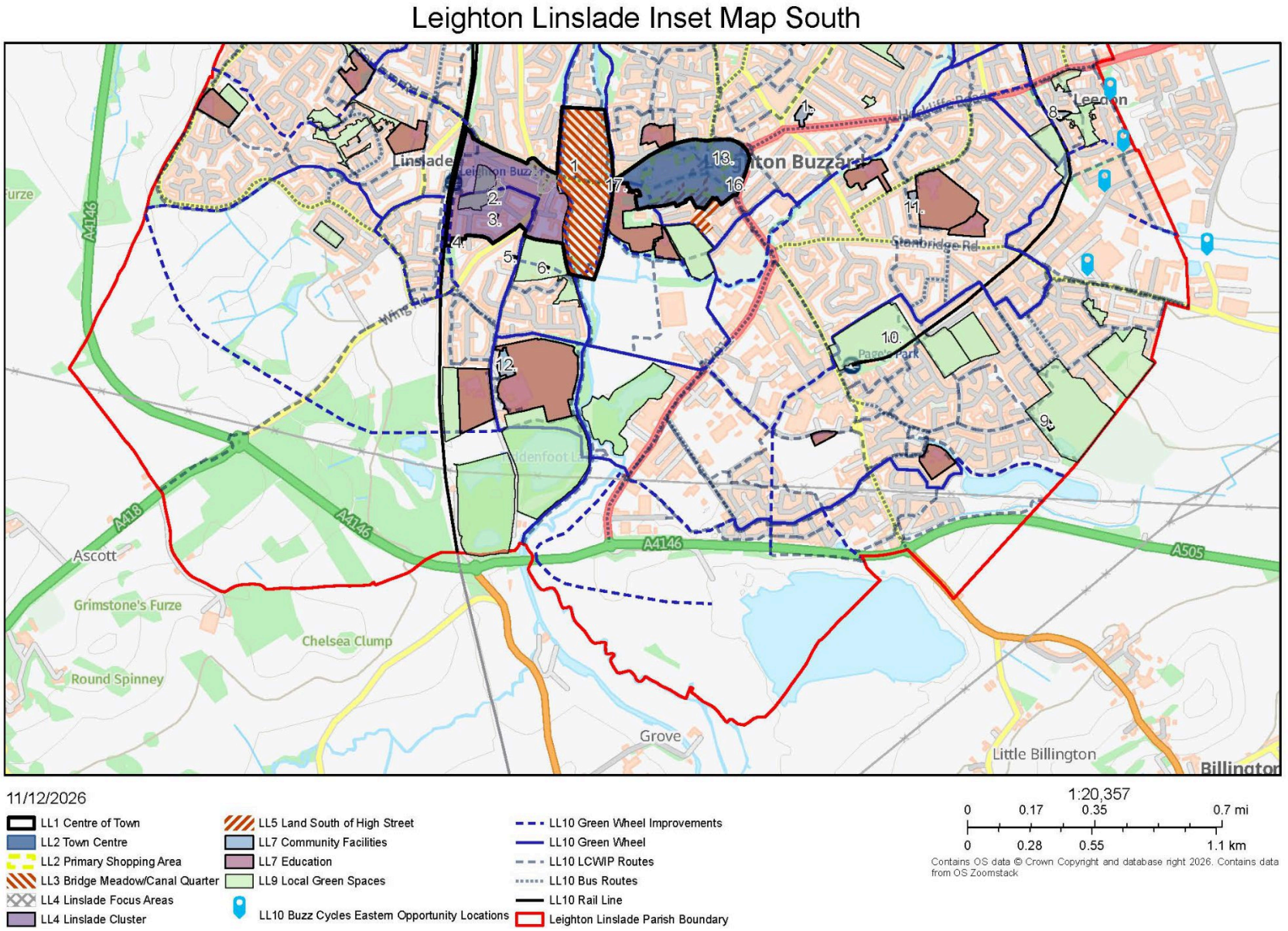
0 0.38 0.75 1.5 km

Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2026.
Contains data from OS Zoomstack

Leighton Linslade Policy Map (whole Neighbourhood Area).



Leighton Linslade Inset Map North.



Leighton Linslade Inset Map South.

4. INFORMATION

4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the Development Plan for the area will be implemented through Central Bedfordshire Council's consideration and determination of planning applications for development in the Town. The Town Council will monitor the effectiveness of the policies through the development management process. In addition, Central Bedfordshire Council will monitor the implementation of Neighbourhood Plan policies, once adopted, through the Authority Monitoring Report which is published annually. This report is prepared in consultation with the relevant town and parish councils each year.

4.2 The Town Council will use a combination of the Local Plan and this Neighbourhood Plan policies to inform and determine its responses to planning applications. The Town Council is a statutory consultee on planning applications made in the Town and it will be made aware of any future planning applications or alterations to those applications by the planning authority. It will seek to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan policies have been identified and applied correctly by applicants and by officers in their decision reports.

4.3 The success or otherwise of the policies will feed into the assessment of the need for a review of the Plan.

4.4 Opportunities may arise through S106 agreements or through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to secure financial contributions to invest in improving local infrastructure. Should Central Bedfordshire Council implement a CIL regime, once Neighbourhood Plan is made the Town Council will be able to determine how and where 25% of the CIL collected from schemes in the Town is spent (currently only 15%) in accordance with the CIL Regulations.

4.5 A list of approved projects for investment through S106 can be found in Appendix G

4.6 LLTC kindly acknowledges the help of the following in the production of the LLNP:

- Leighton Linslade Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
- Central Bedfordshire Council
- Locality
- ONH Planning for Good

5. APPENDICES

5.1 LLTC has referred to the following documents as its evidence to support the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan:

- Appendix A Wider Town Centre Spatial Framework (supplied separately due to size)
- Appendix B Land South of High Street Spatial Framework (supplied separately due to size)
- Appendix C Community Assets Report (supplied separately due to size)
- Appendix D Local Green Spaces Report (supplied separately due to size)
- Appendix E Leighton Linslade Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan (supplied separately due to size)
- Appendix F Glossary of Terms
- Appendix G S106 Priorities.

APPENDIX F GLOSSARY OF TERMS

This glossary accompanies the Leighton Linslade Neighbourhood Plan (LLNP) 2024–2042. It provides definitions and explanations for key terms, abbreviations, and policy-specific terminology used throughout the Plan. The glossary is intended to help residents, stakeholders, and decision-makers understand the technical and planning language that supports the vision and policies of the LLNP. Terms are listed alphabetically for ease of reference.

Active Travel
Forms of transport involving physical activity such as walking, wheeling, or cycling, supported by safe routes and public realm improvements.

Affordable Housing
Housing available at below-market prices or rents for eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.

Appendix
Supplementary section providing evidence, data, or spatial frameworks supporting the Neighbourhood Plan's policies.

Asset of Community Value (ACV)
A building or land designated by the Local Authority as being of community importance, giving community groups the right to bid if it is sold.

Basic Conditions Statement
A supporting document submitted with the Neighbourhood Plan demonstrating how it meets legal and policy requirements.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)
A measurable improvement in biodiversity after development, ensuring the environment is left in a better state than before.

Blue Infrastructure
Water-based environmental features such as rivers, canals, ponds, wetlands, and sustainable drainage systems that support ecology and recreation.

Brownfield Land
Land that has been previously developed, often suitable for redevelopment or regeneration projects.

Building Regulations M4(2) / M4(3)
Standards for accessible and adaptable dwellings (M4(2)) or wheelchair-accessible homes (M4(3)).

CBC (Central Bedfordshire Council)
The Local Planning Authority responsible for planning, development management, and infrastructure in the area.

Chiltern Beechwoods SAC
A Special Area of Conservation designated under the Habitats Directive to protect ancient beech woodlands and their biodiversity.

Climate Change Statement
A report accompanying planning applications demonstrating how proposals minimise carbon emissions and adapt to climate impacts.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
A charge on new development used to fund local infrastructure such as schools, roads, and parks.

Conservation Area
A designated area of special architectural or historic interest, where development must preserve or enhance character and appearance.

Consultation Statement
A document outlining how the community and stakeholders were engaged in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan.

Design Code
Guidance setting out rules and principles to ensure consistent, high-quality design across new development.

Development Brief
A planning document that sets design and use principles for a specific site to guide its future development.

Development Plan
The statutory planning framework that includes Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans, and other adopted policy documents.

Demand Responsive Transport (DRT)
Flexible bus services that operate based on passenger demand rather than fixed routes.

EUI (Energy Use Intensity)
A measure of a building's annual energy consumption per square metre, used to assess efficiency.

F1/F2 Use Classes
Categories of land use under the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, as amended. F1 covers learning and non-residential institutions, F2 covers local community uses.

Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)
A study assessing potential flood impacts and mitigation measures for development proposals.

GBI (Green and Blue Infrastructure)
A connected network of natural and semi-natural areas, green spaces, and waterways delivering environmental, social, and economic benefits.

Green Infrastructure (GI)
Land-based natural and semi-natural networks, including parks, trees, grasslands, and gardens.

Green Wheel
A strategic cycle and walking route encircling Leighton Linslade to promote active travel and connect green spaces.

Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area (NIA)
A regionally significant landscape promoting biodiversity restoration and habitat connectivity.

Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)
A legal assessment determining whether a plan or project could adversely affect a protected European site.

Healthy Streets Initiative
An approach to designing streets that encourage walking, cycling, and community interaction while improving air quality.

Heritage Asset
A site, building, structure, or area with historic, archaeological, or architectural significance.

Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)
A study that identifies the quantity, type, and tenure of housing required to meet local needs.

Infrastructure
Physical and social facilities such as transport, utilities, education, and healthcare that support communities and development.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)
A strategic document setting out the infrastructure required to support planned growth.

Land Use Class (Use Class Order 1987)
The legal classification system defining the types of use permitted for land and buildings (e.g., residential, retail, business).

Leighton Linslade Town Council (LLTC)
The qualifying body responsible for preparing and managing the Leighton Linslade Neighbourhood Plan.

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)
A framework identifying priority routes and measures for active travel improvement.

Local Green Space (LGS)
Areas of local importance designated for protection due to community, recreational, or ecological value.

Local Plan
The Local Authority's principal planning document setting strategic policies for development and land use.

Mitigation Strategy
A plan to offset potential negative environmental or social impacts of a development.

Mixed-Use Development
Development combining different functions such as housing, retail, employment, and community uses.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
The Government's primary planning guidance setting out policies for sustainable development in England.

Neighbourhood Area
The geographical area formally designated for the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan.

Neighbourhood Plan (NP)
A statutory planning document produced by the community that guides local development decisions.

Net Zero Carbon (Zero Carbon Ready)
Development designed to minimise energy use and carbon emissions, ready to operate at zero carbon as the energy grid decarbonises.

Passivhaus Standard
A rigorous international standard for energy-efficient buildings with minimal energy demand for heating and cooling.

Planning Condition
A legal requirement attached to a planning permission controlling specific aspects of the development.

Policies Map
A spatial map accompanying the plan, showing where specific policies and designations apply.

Post-Occupancy Evaluation (POE)
Assessment of a building's performance after occupation, particularly its energy efficiency and occupant satisfaction.

Public Realm
External spaces in towns and cities accessible to the public, including streets, squares, and parks.

Regulation 14 Consultation
The statutory pre-submission consultation stage for Neighbourhood Plans.

Regulation 16 Consultation
The formal consultation undertaken by the Local Authority before independent examination of a Neighbourhood Plan.

Renewable Energy
Energy generated from natural sources such as solar, wind, and geothermal, reducing carbon emissions.

S106 Agreement (Planning Obligation)
A legal agreement between a developer and the Local Authority to provide or fund infrastructure and services.

SAC (Special Area of Conservation)
A European protected site designated for the conservation of natural habitats and species.

SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace)
Green space created to reduce visitor pressure on sensitive protected habitats.

Spatial Framework
A visual and policy-based guide that defines how an area will be developed and connected over time.

SPD (Supplementary Planning Document)
A non-statutory document providing additional detail on policies in the Local Plan.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
A process for evaluating the likely environmental effects of a plan or programme.

SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems)
Design features that manage surface water runoff close to where it falls, reducing flood risk.

Sui Generis
A planning term for uses that do not fall into any specific Use Class (e.g., pubs, nightclubs, theatres).

Sustainable Development
Development that meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own.

Town Centre Vitality
The economic and social health of a town centre, measured by footfall, diversity of uses, and local engagement.

Transport Strategy (LTP3/LTP4)
Local Transport Plans are strategic documents setting priorities for sustainable mobility, active travel, and public transport.LTP3 is the current document in Central Bedfordshire, with LTP4 in development.

Whole Life-Cycle Carbon Assessment
An evaluation of carbon emissions produced throughout the entire life of a building, from construction to demolition.

Wider Town Centre Spatial Framework
A masterplan providing the design and development principles for Leighton Buzzard, Bridge Meadow, and Linslade.

APPENDIX G S106 Priorities

Lobbying & Collaboration projects list 18 July 2024. The list is split into four themed tables: General; Town centre; Climate emergency, sustainability & biodiversity; and Town facilities, services, improvements. "Y" marks the expected timescale for each proposal; a dash (–) means no entry.

General

Ref.	Proposal	Timescale 2024/5	Timescale 3/5 years	Est Budget	Funding	Current Status
a	Demonstrating commitment to diversity across all council activities and policies	Y	–	–	–	Further work could be done regarding this in relation to partners and suppliers.
b	School allotment project	–	Y	–	–	Taking pupils off-site might be difficult unless the school is within walking distance. Some schools have their own plots on-site. Contact could be made to ascertain interest but current allotment waiting list is significant. Consideration could be given to other assets e.g. allocating space within a park or open space for this purpose.
c	Improved road surfaces and traffic flow	–	Y	–	–	Central Bedfordshire Council is the highways authority
d	Set up a regular meeting with CBC officers on traffic issues	Y	–	–	–	Highways officers are now scheduling regular with members and officers

Town centre

Ref.	Proposal	Timescale 2024/5	Timescale 3/5 years	Est Budget	Funding	Current Status
e	How to improve car parking for residents	–	Y	–	–	CBC has statutory responsibility for Highways
f	How to improve traffic flow, e.g. the Bridge Street timed crossing trial	Y	–	–	–	Monies allocated for a trial and commitment to this re-affirmed to CBC October 2023
g	Free car parking offer	Y	–	–	–	3rd year of free Saturday car parking in December in Duncombe Drive and Hockliffe St car parks paid for by town council. CBC car parks are free on bank holidays. Duncombe Drive is currently free on Tues afternoons and on Sundays. Hockliffe St and Baker St car parks are free on Sundays.
h	Improvements to CBC-owned/maintained verges/borders – flowers/wildflowers	Y	–	–	–	This is an ongoing aspiration over many years, in particular driven by the In Bloom campaign. Agreement needed with CBC Highways

Ref.	Proposal	Timescale 2024/5	Timescale 3/5 years	Est Budget	Funding	Current Status
i	Better use of the Waterborne Walk area between Argos and Oxfam	–	Y	–	–	This would require agreement with the owners of Waterborne Walk
j	Late night urinal facility	–	Y	–	–	Further research on this would be needed and likely CBC approval as the town centre landowner and Highways authority
k	Development of land south of the High Street to community benefit eg public buildings & facilities	–	Y	–	–	Masterplan drafted by consultants on behalf of LLTC; initial informal public engagement positive. Two working parties established.
l	More use of the Library facilities	–	Y	–	–	CBC has recently consulted on a draft library strategy and is also looking to undertake a review of the L-L library site.
m	Investigate possibility of supporting the launch of a Banking Hub	–	Y	–	–	With the pending closure of Lloyds and Halifax, how long before Santandar and NatWest follow, how can we support our residents and businesses. An issue that could be raised through Partnership Committee as this is a nation wide issue affecting opther parishes within Central Bedfordshire.

Climate emergency, sustainability & biodiversity

Ref.	Proposal	Timescale 2024/5	Timescale 3/5 years	Est Budget	Funding	Current Status
n	Commit resources to the Ouzel Valley Park steering group to facilitate cycling and walking links with the southern meadows	–	Y	–	–	CBC leading on cycling and walking strategy through sustainability team – also represented on OVPSG
o	Create a clear plan with partners such as CBC and GST to manage rubbish in the River Ouzel	–	Y	–	–	This could be discussed at the OVPSG
p	Improved planting on riverside walk	–	Y	–	–	This could be discussed further at the OVPSG but funding/resources might require committee approval

Town facilities, services, improvements

Ref.	Proposal	Timescale 2024/5	Timescale 3/5 years	Est Budget	Funding	Current Status

Ref.	Proposal	Timescale 2024/5	Timescale 3/5 years	Est Budget	Funding	Current Status
q	Healthcare which is fit for purpose	–	Y	–	–	The Localism Act 2011 prevents authorities from providing anything which is the statutory responsibility of another body. The Health Services working party seeks to engage with the NHS and partners to lobby for improved local healthcare facilities.
r	Help with additional premises for healthcare provision in winter 2023/24	Y	–	–	–	The Localism Act 2011 prevents authorities from providing anything which is the statutory responsibility of another body. The Health Services working party seeks to engage with the NHS and partners to lobby for improved local healthcare facilities.
s	Permanent police presence in the town	–	Y	–	–	The Localism Act 2011 prevents authorities from providing anything which is the statutory responsibility of another body. The Council seeks to engage with the Police to lobby for improved local policing.
t	Effective use of vacant buildings e.g. Duncombe Drive day centre once vacated	Y	–	–	–	Supported by the Partnership Committee and others
u	Facilities for art and history/heritage	–	Y	–	–	The detail of what may be possible in the short/medium/long term would require additional scoping, partnership working and resources
v	Joined up public transport e.g. buses to schools and hospitals	–	Y	–	–	LLTC has supported the formation of a local bus user group to lobby authorities for service improvements.
w	Attracting new businesses into the town – more jobs, more potential customers	Y	–	–	–	CBC has an inward investment and business support team; six monthly updates provided in report to Partnership Committee. LLTC run an annual Business Networking event
x	Pedestrian access along Old Linslade Road	–	Y	–	–	This would require support from CBC as highways authority, current CBC cyling and walking strategy does include outline plans
y	Take more advantage of S106 money	–	Y	–	–	Engagement with CBC S106 officers has been a longstanding aspiration with very limited success to date, the new NHP development will assist with this.
z	Public toilets at Tiddenfoot Waterside Park	–	Y	–	–	CBC is landowner for this site and has aspirations to build a visitor centre funded by southern LB S106 monies
aa	Evening youth centre	–	Y	–	–	Current provider commissioned by CBC for youth services runs a youth club twice a week; youth provision contract due for renewal and discussions taking place with other councils

Ref.	Proposal	Timescale 2024/5	Timescale 3/5 years	Est Budget	Funding	Current Status
bb	Pedestrian crossing on Grovebury Road near retail park to facilitate access to canal and TWP	–	Y	–	–	A CBC Highway responsibility. Subject to agreement and funding by CBC as highways authority
cc	Soft play centre	–	–	–	–	This is a Commercial project
dd	Use of empty/derelict industrial sites on Grovebury Road for community benefit	–	Y	–	–	Resources would be required to liaise with landowners and community groups to consider community needs and viability
ee	Future of Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre	–	Y	–	–	Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre is now registered as an asset of community value by LLTC. No decision will be made by CBC regarding its future pending development of a new leisure centre to the east of the town. Some Tiddenfoot facilities are used by neighbouring schools.
ff	Attracting new businesses into the town – more jobs, more potential customers	Y	–	–	–	CBC has an inward investment and business support team; six monthly updates provided in report to Partnership Committee. LLTC run an annual Business Networking event
gg	Evening youth centre	–	Y	£3500 per annum	–	Current provider commissioned by CBC for youth services runs a youth club twice a week; youth provision contract due for renewal and discussions taking place with other councils. Additional Youth Worker Hours x 4
hh	Climbing wall	–	Y	–	–	A suitable indoor/outdoor site would need to be identified. To ensure health and safety, this would need to be manned and therefore be commercially viable or subsidised.