

# Neighbourhood Plan

for Caddington & Slip End

# 2016 - 2031

FINAL VERSION

Caddington

Slip End

Your village...  
Your plan...

**Your  
Future!**



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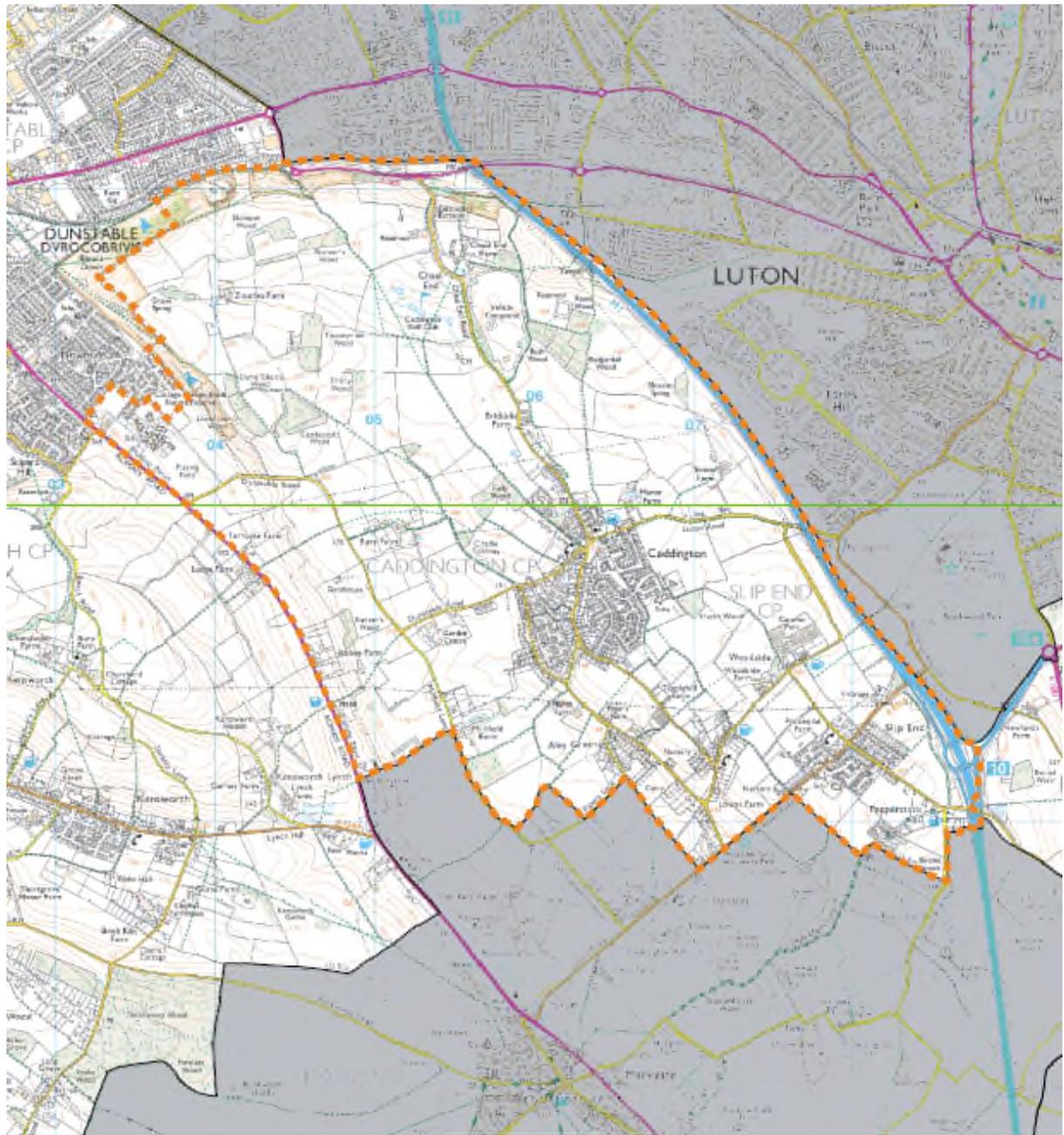
## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document represents the Neighbourhood Plan for the parishes of Caddington and Slip End. It represents one part of the development plan for the parishes of Caddington and Slip End over the period 2016 to 2031, the other part being the 2004 South Bedfordshire Local Plan.
- 1.2 Central Bedfordshire Council, as the local planning authority, designated a Neighbourhood Area for the whole of the Caddington and Slip End parishes in March 2013 to enable Caddington and Slip End Parish Councils to prepare a Joint Neighbourhood Plan. The Caddington and Slip End Neighbourhood Plan (CaSENP) has been prepared by the community through the Caddington and Slip End Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (CaSENPSG).
- 1.3 Throughout the whole process of producing the Neighbourhood Plan, the two parishes have worked closely with Central Bedfordshire Council, both elected Members and officers. This has included attendance at Steering Group Meetings, help and advice during the assessment of sites, advising on the European Directives requirements and close liaison in the drafting of the text and policies. The planning policy background has been changing rapidly throughout this period and the complexities of aligning CaSENP with the emerging Development Strategy and then the new Central Bedfordshire Local Plan have been a matter of close liaison. Much of the evidence and reasoning behind the Submission CBC Local Plan (published January 2018) did not emerge until after the Submission Version of the CaSENP had been completed. However, it is clear that the CaSENP is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the emerging CBC Local Plan as well as the existing South Bedfordshire Local Plan (which remains the statutory development plan for the area until superseded by the adopted CBC Local Plan).
- 1.4 The majority of the two parishes lie within the Green Belt, the settlements of Caddington and Slip End are excluded. This means that the CaSENP has been constrained in allocating sites for development, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 only allows Local Planning Authorities (i.e. CBC) to alter Green Belt boundaries. As a result of this constraint, and given the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan, the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has also been inhibited in the range of potential policies and the realistic alternatives that can be assessed. This has potentially curtailed the iterative process. However, the SEA is considered to be robust and appropriate and satisfies the European Directive requirements.
- 1.5 The CaSENP is being prepared in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012. The CaSENPSG has prepared the plan to establish a vision for the future of the Neighbourhood Plan area and to set out how that vision will be realised through planning and controlling land use and development change over the plan period 2016 to 2031.
- 1.6 The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to guide development within the Neighbourhood Plan area and provide guidance to any interested parties wishing to submit planning applications for development. The process of producing a plan has sought to involve the community as widely as possible and the different topic areas are reflective of matters that are of considerable importance to Caddington and Slip End, their residents, businesses and community groups.
- 1.7 Each section of the plan covers a different topic. Under each heading there is the justification for the policies presented which provides the necessary understanding of the policy and what it is seeking to achieve. The policies themselves are presented in the blue boxes. It is these policies against which



planning applications will be assessed. It is advisable that, in order to understand the full context for any individual policy, it is read in conjunction with the supporting text.

- 1.8 The map below shows the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area, which is contiguous with the boundaries of Caddington and Slip End parishes.



**Neighbourhood Plan Area**

Ordnance Survey map licence No 100049029



## Why here & why now

- 1.9 The two parishes of Caddington & Slip End were historically one parish serving a number of villages and hamlets located along an escarpment at the Eastern end of the Chiltern Hills, sometimes referred to as a 'string of pearls'. The area has a rural feel and within the South Bedfordshire Green Belt (apart from the built up areas of Caddington and Slip End villages). The two parishes are bounded by the towns of Dunstable to the North and Luton to the East.
- 1.10 In common with many communities in the South East of England the pressure on land use is acutely felt, with a particular demand for new housing development in Southern Bedfordshire. It was the emergence of a proposal to develop 5,500 houses and associated commercial development across some 800 acres of Green Belt within the plan area that prompted a local debate over the future direction and also aspiration for the area. Had this plan proceeded Caddington & Slip End would effectively have become suburbs of Luton.
- 1.11 To the East of the plan area the Borough of Luton has a stated policy of largescale development to the West of the town beyond the Borough boundary. The parish communities within the plan area have been very clear that they do not support such plans, which evidentially are not sustainable.
- 1.12 The communities within the plan area are clear that the development of a Neighbourhood Plan is not a mechanism to stop development; it is a legitimate process that will see significant sustainable development within the context of small rural communities – this plan enthusiastically embraces the spirit and the letter of the Localism Act. This plan is entirely in accord with the intention and purpose of the provisions for the local determination of Neighbourhood Planning.
- 1.13 The opportunity provided for under the Localism Act to develop a Neighbourhood Plan which engaged the whole community was identified as an ideal opportunity to develop a long term strategy which would lay out necessary housing provision, significantly increased the quantum of green space, specifically provides for older people / retirement accommodation, celebrates the rich archaeological history in the area and identifies which areas of Green Belt the community wished to protect to ensure that the area retained a largely rural feel.
- 1.14 Throughout the extensive consultation process, involving every part of the community, there has been active engagement with and clear support for the emerging policies which underpin these high-level objectives.
- 1.15 As the plan developed it was clear that there was support for the provision of appropriate new housing to ensure that the locality could provide for its future needs. A specific need emerged for fit-for-purpose retirement accommodation to enable the relatively high number of older people to move out of larger family homes, but to remain in the immediate area.
- 1.16 The plan Steering Group has been very clear that while appropriate housing provision was an essential part of the emerging plan, a sole focus on housing would be a missed opportunity to gain significant improvements to the green infrastructure within the plan area.
- 1.17 The most exciting idea to emerge from the plan development process was the proposal to provide for a significant increase in walking, cycling and riding routes which would also allow for compact new nature reserves and permit a rich archaeological history to be marked out and made more accessible.
- 1.18 The CaSENPSG began the preparation of the plan in 2012 and has dedicated over 4 years work to the emerging plan. The scope and scale of the plan has grown significantly during that time as a result of



consultation. The Plan is accompanied by a series of technical documents including a Strategic Environmental Assessment required under European legislation. The other background documents include work to support the Green infrastructure proposals and the consideration of sites proposed for development. The CaSENPSPG offers for further consultation an exciting and challenging opportunity for the communities involved.

- 1.19 We believe that this plan lays out a deliverable plan to achieve all of the objectives published in 2012 – this plan will provide for appropriate new housing, provide significant new green infrastructure and deliver specific objectives such as a new village hall in Caddington, increased sports provision and improvements to school infrastructure in Slip End.

## National policy & Parish Council Resolutions

- 1.20 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states:

*“Neighbourhood Planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need. Parishes ... can use Neighbourhood Planning to set planning policies through Neighbourhood Plans to determine decisions on planning applications (para.183).*

*Neighbourhood Planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community. The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.*

*Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. To facilitate this, local planning authorities should set out clearly their strategic policies for the area and ensure that an up-to-date Local Plan is in place as quickly as possible. Neighbourhood Plans should reflect these policies and neighbourhoods should plan positively to support them. Neighbourhood Plans and orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies (para.184).*

*Outside these strategic elements, Neighbourhood Plans will be able to shape and direct sustainable development in their area. Once a Neighbourhood Plan has demonstrated its general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and is brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood, where they are in conflict. Local planning authorities should avoid duplicating planning processes for non-strategic policies where a Neighbourhood Plan is in preparation (para.185)”.*

- 1.21 The relevant South Bedfordshire Local Plan was adopted in 2004 and, under the guidance provided by the NPPF, much of it is out of date. There was an emerging Central Bedfordshire Development Strategy covering the period to 2031 which was withdrawn in November 2015. However, much of the evidence underpinning that document is relevant and has provided some of the strategic context for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.22 Central Bedfordshire as the local planning authority has now embarked on the development of a new Local Plan and this Neighbourhood Plan is anticipated to be in conformity with its emerging policies.



- 1.23 Caddington Parish Council held a special meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2011 to formally approve its support for the development of a Neighbourhood Plan. This resolution was duly recorded in the Parish minutes. Slip End Parish Council also held a special meeting of the council on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2011 and resolved to support the development of a joint Neighbourhood Plan, this was duly recorded in the minutes.
- 1.24 At its meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> April 2015 Caddington Parish Council resolved to request that Slip End Parish Council acted as the lead Parish Council within the partnership and to act as the accountable body in dealing with financial matters and oversight of the NP Steering Group.



## Consultation

- 1.25 The CaSENPSG has developed the Neighbourhood Plan through extensive engagement with the community.
- 1.26 Every section of the community has been engaged through a range of consultation events over a period of 4 years and the information that emerged from this engagement has provided a robust and comprehensive basis on which to plan for the future. The full detail of consultation events is presented in the Consultation Statement that accompanies the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.27 The chronology of consultation records 22 specific events between January 2012 and March 2015, ranging from newsletters to targeted consultations with hard-to-reach groups to two-day events, one of which attracted over 500 visitors.
- 1.28 The CaSENPSG has taken consultation very seriously and believes that by engaging with the community as a whole and with specific target groups on a regular basis it has ensured the support of both parishes as it has moved through development of the plan. The CaSENPSG also took the decision to provide information and in order to consult in a highly professional manner, it has where appropriate spent money on leaflets, banners, maps and other communication tools that have informed and educated the whole community. This approach has led to a high response rate when we have sought opinions and views on aspects of the emerging plan.

### *Short-listed site map at a consultation event in March 2015*



- 1.29 Consultation has not just been about asking for views and opinions. Ensuring that residents and other stakeholders can provide informed views and opinions is equally important, therefore the means by which we have explained specific issues and why we have proposed aspects of the plan has been critical to obtaining robust evidence.



The Neighbourhood Plan marquee at the Caddington Village Day, September 2014



- 1.30 During the consultation process there has been a clear shift in opinion towards the development of a Neighbourhood Plan. It began as a means of defending the Green Belt against large scale, opportunistic development proposals, but migrated into an emerging plan which offered significant benefits to the whole community including purpose-built accommodation for older living, increased leisure and sporting facilities, starter and shared housing for younger people and a significant uplift in Green Infrastructure.
- 1.31 Many hundreds of hours have been devoted to consulting community groups, schools, business and local enterprise, older people's groups such as Caddington Care and external stakeholders such as housing associations, care providers, developers, land owners and statutory consultees such as English Heritage.
- 1.32 The process of consultation has shaped, guided and in some cases altered the direction in which the Neighbourhood Plan has developed. It has also provided the basis on which the vision and objectives have emerged and provided a robust basis on which the CaSENPSPG can propose a plan which is highly sustainable and which meets the future needs of its whole community.



## LOCAL CONTEXT

### History of Caddington and Slip End

- 1.33 The two parishes of Caddington and Slip End have evolved over many years into thriving villages which have a rural feel, but with the benefit of access to key services within a few minutes travel time. The preparation and planning process for the Neighbourhood Plan has identified historic settlements dating back to Palaeolithic and Stone Age and it is the intention to use the Neighbourhood Plan to celebrate the rich archaeological history of the area. Caddington has a designated Conservation Area and there are 5 listed buildings and a Scheduled Ancient Monument in the area. There are also Archaeological Notification Areas within the parishes.
- 1.34 The area can be subject to flooding which can be very disruptive at times of poor weather. Any new development will be expected to refer to this report on flood risk which is based on detailed hydraulic modelling of the area <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/planning/flooding/downloads.aspx>
- 1.35 The two parishes currently comprise a string of smaller settlements along an escarpment to the West of Luton and to the South of Dunstable. The parish of Slip End comprises the hamlets of Pepperstock, Woodside and part of Aley Green plus the village of Slip End. The name Slip End is possibly associated with local brickworks which were a feature of the area in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Slip End has a Parish Church - St Andrews, and a school which previously catered for up to 7-year-old pupils, but became a primary school (so adding 2 more year groups) during 2016.
- 1.36 The hamlets of Woodside and Pepperstock pre-date the village of Slip End and have historic remains which will be marked and celebrated through the creation of a Heritage Greenway running the length of the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- 1.37 Slip End parish has a significant population which has lived in the area for several generations, but its terraced housing in Front Street, Church Road and Summer Street also provide housing for younger couples starting on the housing ladder as it provides an easy commute to London via Luton Airport Parkway Station.



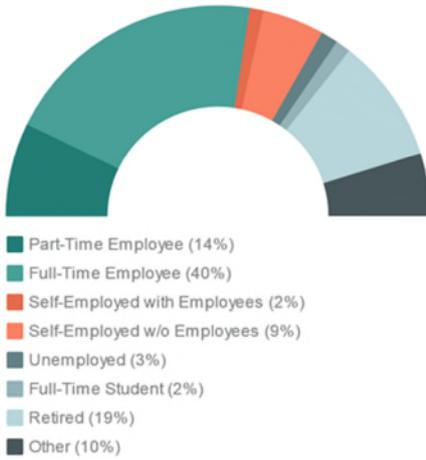
- 1.38 Caddington parish is one of the largest in Bedfordshire and stretches from Dunstable in the north; it has as its western boundary the A5 Watling Rd and the M1 to the East. It abuts Slip End to the south. From a medieval village site at Zouches Farm, to ancient remains to the eastern side of the Parish, Caddington is a historic place. Today it is a village with a strong rural feel and strong connections to surrounding settlements. It too has links to the brick industry and the Caddington Blue provided the raw material from which many parts of Luton were built.
- 1.39 The parishes are wholly within the Green Belt (except for the built-up areas of Caddington and Slip End) and significant areas also sit within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 1.40 Up to 2001, a single Parish Council served both Caddington and Slip End, but today each community has its own Parish Council.



## Profile of the community today

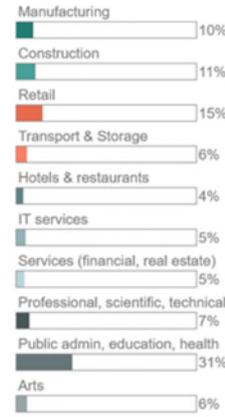
All data is derived from 2011 Census unless otherwise stated

### Economic Activity



### Employment Sector

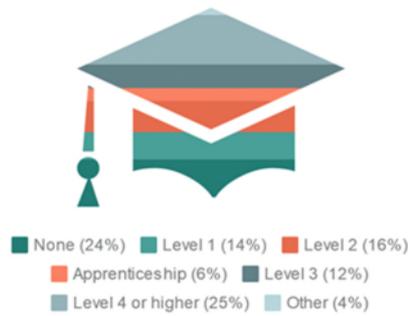
#### Caddington and Slip End



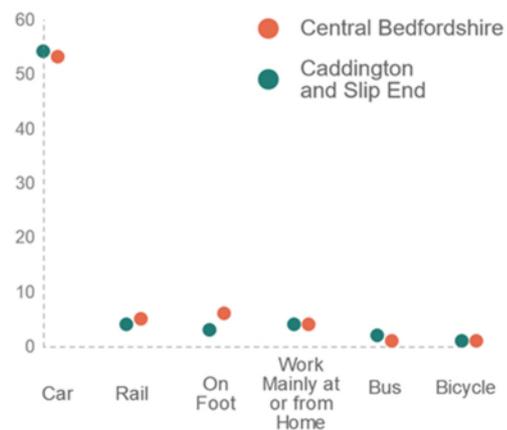
#### Central Bedfordshire



### Qualifications



### Method of Travel to Work (%)



### Average Cars per Household

Caddington and Slip End



Central Bedfordshire



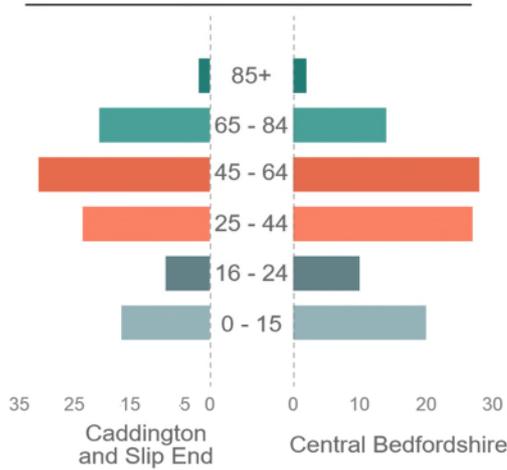
## Socio-economic Profile: Caddington and Slip End

All data is derived from 2011 Census unless otherwise stated

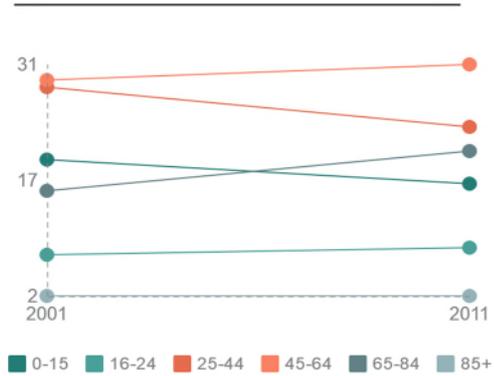
Total Population

# 5,534

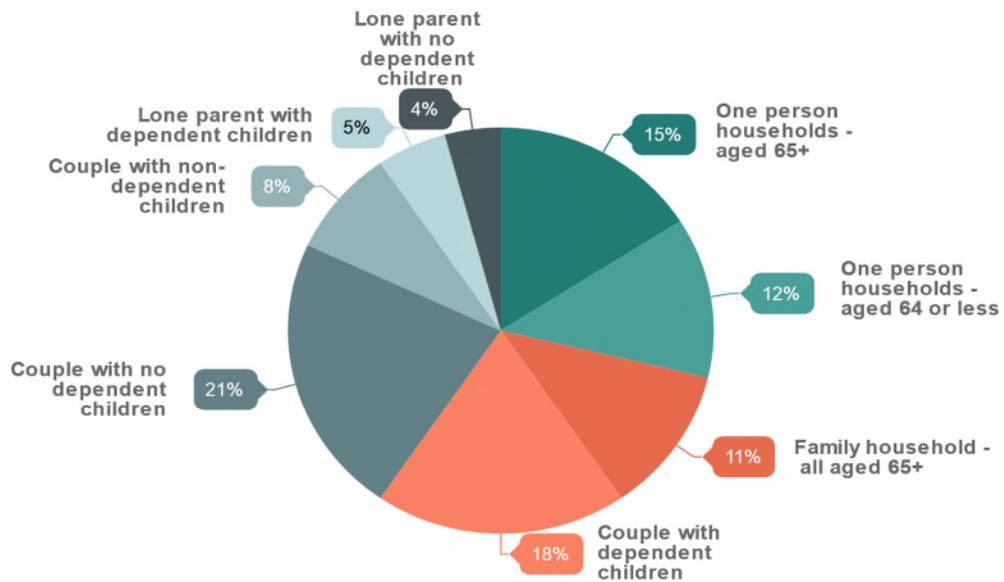
### Age Profile



### Age Profile Change 2001 - 2011



### Household Composition



Unless stated otherwise, the profile of the community has come from the 2011 Census. A more detailed profile is shown in Appendix A.



## Local infrastructure

- 1.41 The development of the Neighbourhood Plan has recognised that the process is an opportunity to take a positive approach to the provision of infrastructure and amenities across the Plan area. It identifies current provision and clearly highlights where there is need for additional services and housing provision such as additional playing fields and the provision of fit-for-purpose older people's accommodation within the area. Engagement has taken place with schools, older people support groups, local businesses, landowners and community groups.
- 1.42 Existing social infrastructure is listed in the Strategic Environmental Assessment and covers the current provision of facilities such as shops, business premises, playing fields, schools, churches and meeting halls. Overall, the Neighbourhood Plan area is well served with a wide range of local services and the emerging plan includes policies on small businesses, local services and the provision of leisure and sports facilities.

Name	Location	Notes
<b>Retail / business outlets</b>		
Harpers Fine Foods	Pepperstock	Largest employer in Slip End
Slip End Superstore	Slip End	Local shop
Mignonette Wedding shop	Slip End	Wedding dress shop
Woodside Animal Farm	Woodside	Includes range of services / outlets alongside a significant tourist attraction
Elm Avenue Parade of shops	Caddington	Inc convenience store, funeral director & an electricians offices
Charisma Hair Salon	Caddington	Local to Elm Avenue estate
Town & Country Estate Agents	Caddington	Offices in Markyate & Redbourn
Cutting Crew Hairdressers	Caddington	Within the Caddington parade of shops
Post Office & Store	Caddington	Manor Road, Caddington
Co-op	Caddington	Largest food store within the plan area
Revive Beauty Salon	Caddington	Manor Road parade
Butterfly Funerals, Elm Avenue	Caddington	Elm Avenue parade of shops



<b>Professional Services &amp; Business Parks (with shopfront)</b>		
Capital Manor Financial Services	Caddington	Manor Road, Caddington
Aston's Accountants	Caddington	Manor Road, Caddington
Slip End Garages (Citroen Main Dealer)	Slip End	Markyate Road, Slip End
Airparks - off airport parking facility	Slip End	Grove Road, Slip End
Paige Parking - off airport parking	Slip End	Grove Road, Slip End
Caddington Garage (car sales & Servicing)	Caddington	A number of motor vehicle related businesses
Cotswold Business Park	Caddington	Millfield Lane, Caddington
Eden Brae Business Park	Caddington	Dunstable Rd, Caddington
Lower Woodside Business Centre	Woodside	Woodside Rd, Woodside
Doctor / GP Surgery	Caddington	Manor Rd, Caddington

<b>Leisure &amp; sports facilities</b>		
Slip End Playing Fields	Slip End	Tennis, football
Village Hall Recreation / play ground	Slip End	Children's play equipment
Edgecote park	Caddington	Children's play equipment
Sports & Social Club playing fields	Caddington	Cricket & football facilities, Manor Road, Caddington
Slip End Allotments	Slip End	Front St, Slip End
Caddington Leisure Gardens (allotments)	Caddington	Dunstable Road, Caddington
Fairgreen Ave recreation park	Caddington	Children's play equipment
MUGA, Rushmore Close	Caddington	Children's play equipment

<b>Hotel, Food &amp; Drink outlets</b>		
Harpers Fine Foods	Pepperstock	Fine Food & deli, Restaurant
Slip End Social Club	Slip End	New St, Slip End
Frog & Rhubarb PH	Slip End	Church Rd, Slip End
Rising Sun PH	Slip End	Front St, Slip End
The Plough PH	Woodside	Woodside Rd, Woodside
Jakes Café	Woodside	Woodside Animal Farm
Spice of Caddington	Caddington	Manor Road, Caddington
Nice Baps	Caddington	Manor Rd parade
Pizza & Fast food outlet	Caddington	Manor Rd parade
The Chequers PH	Caddington	The Green Caddington
The Cricketers PH	Caddington	Manor Rd, Caddington
Sports & Social Club	Caddington	Manor Rd, Caddington
Holiday Inn Express	Caddington	Outskirts of Dunstable
Horse & Jockey Travel Lodge	Caddington	On the A5



Churches & Meeting places		
St Andrews Church	Slip End	Parish Church
Slip End Village Hall	Slip End	
Peter Edwards Memorial Hall	Slip End	
Catholic Church	Caddington	Manor Road, Caddington
All Saints Church	Caddington	Parish Church
Baptist Church	Caddington	Luton Road
Collings-Wells Hall	Caddington	Owned by the church
Sports & Social Club	Caddington	Owned by the Parish Council
Heathfield Centre	Caddington	Former school
Aley Green Chapel	Aley Green	Mancroft Rd, Aley Green
Aley Green Cemetery	Aley Green	

Schools & educational facilities		
Slip End School	Slip End	Federated with CVS
Caddington Village School (CVS)	Caddington	Federated with Slip End
Manshead Secondary School	Caddington	Part of the Ashton Foundation
St Mary's RC Primary School	Caddington	Catholic
Streetfield Middle School	Caddington	Closed in 2016 (site merged)
Slip End Playgroup, Village Hall	Slip End	Village Hall, Slip End
Caddington Playgroup	Heathfield	Heathfield



### Local Plan policy and related planning issues

- 1.43 A number of planning issues impact on the developing and emerging Neighbourhood Plan, including existing planning permissions for developments which are recognised but not included within the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.44 The relevant adopted local plan with which this Neighbourhood Plan should be in general conformity is the 2004 South Bedfordshire Local Plan. However, this is mainly out of date and therefore the key focus has been to ensure that the plan has appropriate regard to national policy, mainly contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The CaSENPSG is also able to rely on a number of new and emerging policies, e.g. the Central Bedfordshire Council Design Guide for Development.
- 1.45 The most important event which emerged during the early stages of the Neighbourhood Plan was a decision by General Motors to declare its car storage facility at Chaul End redundant and subsequently secure planning permission for up to 325 housing units along with a number of wider community benefits.
- 1.46 The Chaul End development proposals do have an impact on the Neighbourhood Plan in a number of ways, including funding for a significant section of the proposals for a Heritage Greenway, upgrading of Chaul End Road and the potential for additional community services such as a bus service between Chaul End and Pepperstock.
- 1.47 Overall the Chaul End development is viewed as being complementary to the Neighbourhood Plan and in some aspects provides some additional windfall development which reduces some local housing pressure. The establishment of a community trust within the Chaul End development is an important initiative which will offer to the area some 44 additional rental homes, a community centre, 35 acres of woodland and a regular bus service.
- 1.48 The Chaul End development also offers an exemplar in how a developer can engage with the local community who have had a significant involvement in how the planning application emerged.
- 1.49 Land within the Neighbourhood Plan area at Grove Road/Markyate Road in Slip End is currently used for off-airport parking and garage servicing. The site is identified as 'white land' within the 2004 South Bedfordshire Local Plan, but is unlikely to be brought forward for development within the timescale of this plan.



## 2 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

### Challenges for Caddington and Slip End

- 2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address, as far as is possible, the challenges that face the communities of Caddington and Slip End. In summary, these challenges are:
- ✓ The importance of retaining Caddington and Slip End's identity as a 'string' of rural communities. In particular, these communities must retain their physical separation from urban Luton.
  - ✓ An ageing population that has particular demands in terms of their housing and care needs and accessibility to services. In particular, how to address the ambition of many older people to remain within the local community in fit-for-purpose housing
  - ✓ To ensure that there is housing capable of being accessed by first-time buyers and those unable to access housing on the open market that have a local connection to Caddington and Slip End.
  - ✓ To facilitate appropriate growth in the population but in a manner than minimises the impact on the environment, both in terms of built development and movement of people.
  - ✓ Continuing to ensure that local services and facilities are adequate and well-used so that they may be retained and continue to provide a focus for the community. In particular, this relates to health needs, which is partly related to the ageing population.
  - ✓ The importance of providing some local employment so that not everyone who wants to access a job has to travel outside of Caddington and Slip End to do so. The growing trend of self-employment and home working is a particular type of working that must be nurtured.
  - ✓ The importance of retaining the bus services as the principle means of travelling outside of the parishes without a car.
  - ✓ The wider role that the community of Caddington and Slip End needs to play in addressing climate change by reducing energy consumption and providing the opportunity for local sustainable energy generation.
  - ✓ We currently have no obvious means of celebrating our rich cultural heritage and providing access to and information about the large number of historic sites within the plan area
  - ✓ The plan area is set in attractive rolling countryside, but the development of this plan provides an opportunity to increase the overall level of Green Infrastructure through new leisure facilities, bridle paths, cycle-ways, and footpaths. The challenge is how and who pays for it.



## Vision for Caddington and Slip End

2.2 In consultation with the community, the established vision for Caddington and Slip End is as follows:

*'Our vision for this Neighbourhood Plan is to make Caddington and Slip End the most sustainable rural communities in the country – bar none.*

*This encompasses the unique challenge of protecting and celebrating our past, retaining the best of our present, and actively creating a sustainable future.*

*Our neighbourhood has significant historical importance, which has received international recognition; as well as preserving the key elements of our history; we want to make it more accessible for enjoyment and education, through creation of the Heritage Greenway.*

*An important part of our present is the rural feel of the two parishes, comprising a string of individual villages and hamlets. We want to retain this characteristic, ensuring the individual communities remain separated through undeveloped green spaces.*

*Future planning will cater for increased housing demand for older people and younger entrants to the housing market, whilst ensuring that we maximise the sustainability of our community, through careful consideration of design, energy, communication and local service provision aspects; all created in a safe and secure environment.*

*Our plan area intends to be energy self-sufficient through the local generation of green energy – both commercially and through micro-generation at the household level'*



## Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

2.3 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan as identified through engagement with the community are as follows:

1. The rural character of the two parishes will be maintained and undeveloped space retained between individual communities to protect their unique identities.
2. To nurture and enable the creation of the Heritage Greenway across both parishes to encourage sustainable transport through improved and extended footpaths, bridleways and cycle ways; and to make the historic and natural features of this area better understood and more accessible.
3. New housing will be provided to meet the needs of all age groups - to enable older residents to remain in the community and to assist younger people to get on the housing ladder.
4. All new housing will be integrated sensitively, will meet high standards of sustainability and ensure that new residents can become part of the community. High build standards will be maintained.
5. Community facilities, retail outlets and local businesses will be supported and enhanced, with new opportunities for appropriate commercial activities promoted to ensure the area can service the community's needs locally and sustainably.
6. Our existing sports and leisure facilities will be protected and improved; identified opportunities for enhanced sport and recreation provision will be supported.
7. Health facilities across the neighbourhood will be improved, with a particular focus on improved primary provision for Slip End.
8. Improved and safer routes to schools throughout the Neighbourhood Plan area will be provided and promoted to reduce reliance on cars.
9. Traffic will be better managed, with the safety of pedestrians being the top priority.
10. Active consideration will be given to developments that support sustainable energy (with the aim of achieving energy self-sufficiency) and better communications (including comprehensive high-speed broadband).



### 3 HOUSING NEEDS

- 3.1 Central Bedfordshire is expected to make provision for significant levels of growth over the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan. Caddington, classified as a Minor Service Centre, and Slip End, as a Large Village, are expected to make contribution towards addressing these needs. As part of this, it is recognised that Caddington and Slip End have housing needs within the local community and it is right that these needs should be addressed first before any wider housing needs are tackled.
- 3.2 It is important to understand that saying ‘no’ to housing is not an option. For Caddington and Slip End to have the best chance of protecting and nurturing what is most important to the local community, it is important that this is articulated through a Neighbourhood Plan. This Plan recognises this and the fact that a lack of careful plan-making could result in Caddington and Slip End along with the other settlements that make up the ‘string of pearls’ (a reference to the settlements that sit atop the north/south escarpment running from Chaul End to Pepperstock) could become part of the outward expansion of urban Luton, so losing their identity and role as thriving rural communities.
- 3.3 Throughout the development of this Plan there has been a growing recognition that there are benefits to providing some new housing to address identified needs – these include helping younger people get on the housing ladder providing quality accommodation for older people who wish to remain local, but downsize their accommodation, and increase the number of affordable homes within the area to meet local demand.

#### There is a need for smaller properties

- 3.4 The Luton and Central Bedfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Refresh 2014<sup>1</sup> highlighted that around one-third of all housing need in Central Bedfordshire is for 1- and 2-bed properties<sup>2</sup>.
- 3.5 The Housing Needs Survey carried out in August 2013 for CaSENPSG also highlights the need for smaller properties and indicates a need for purpose-built accommodation for older people. Affordable housing was also raised as an issue in the Survey which reflected local concern as mentioned in Paragraph 3.3. However, during the period of preparation of the CaSENP, a local lettings policy has been implemented by the CaSE Community Trust which is providing some access to affordable housing for local people. Accordingly, there is no need for a policy relating to this in the CaSENP.

#### Affordability is an issue

- 3.6 Related to this is the relative lack of affordability of housing in Luton and Central Bedfordshire. The SHMA 2014 Refresh shows that across the whole area, there was a combined lower quartile house price to income ratio of 8.3<sup>3</sup>. In other words, the cost of buying one of the 25% cheapest dwellings in Luton and Central Bedfordshire would be 8.3 times the earnings of a household (when typical mortgage lending is at three times the household income). To put this in perspective, this is 25% above the national average. For just Luton Borough, the ratio is only 12% above the national average, so the Central Bedfordshire figure is markedly higher.

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<sup>1</sup> Opinion Research Services (2014) *Luton and Central Bedfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment Refresh*, for Central Bedfordshire Council and Luton Borough Council

<sup>2</sup> 2014 SHMA Refresh, Figure 63

<sup>3</sup> 2014 SHMA Refresh, Figure 59



- 3.7 This position is mirrored locally in Caddington and Slip End. There are significant local needs for affordable housing. The Central Bedfordshire Housing Register had approximately 1,800 households on it in mid-2015. Locally there is a small but significant number of households with social housing needs that must be met and Rural Exceptions Schemes and allocations outside the remit of the CaSENP aim to address this.

### **There is a lack of housing suitable for older people**

- 3.8 As recognised in the socio-economic analysis in Section 2, there is also a significant and growing demand for accommodation that is suitable for the needs of older people.
- 3.9 An emerging issue in Central Bedfordshire is the under-supply of appropriate accommodation for older people and it is our ambition to address the local element of this need through the innovative provision of new and additional accommodation. We recognise that this provision will need to have a mix of market and affordable units and we envisage delivering/meeting some of this demand through the site allocation process. The Housing Needs Survey (HNS) carried out in August 2013 by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) demonstrates clear evidence of a demand for accommodation specifically for older people. In 2011 almost 20% of the population within the Neighbourhood Plan area were aged 64 or over and just under 12% of households were aged 65 or more. These are significantly higher percentages than for the rest of Central Bedfordshire or England as a whole.
- 3.10 There is currently a limited level of housing or care facilities available for people at or approaching retirement age in the wider area. The Priory View development in Dunstable will provide 83 1- and 2-bed apartments for affordable rent and shared ownership for people aged 55 and over that need some support to remain independent. It is not expected to open until early 2016 yet all places have already been filled, with 400 applications made off-plan.
- 3.11 The Neighbourhood Plan policies will encourage innovation in the way that older people are accommodated through high quality, mixed tenure developments, which in turn will free up existing family homes and reduce the demand for the construction of new houses.
- 3.12 Currently 3.3% of housing in Caddington and 1.3% of housing in Slip End is in the form of flats. The HNS indicates that there is a higher demand for smaller accommodation than currently provided within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

### **Chaul End will provide for a considerable level of housing need**

- 3.13 General Motors was granted planning permission in 2014 for a residential-led, mixed use development at Chaul End. In accordance with Policy 63a of the CBC Submission Development Strategy (now withdrawn), the development will provide up to 325 residential units, 500m<sup>2</sup> of community space, green infrastructure and cycling and public transport infrastructure. This development scheme was devised collaboratively with the local community.
- 3.14 It is expected to provide a mix of housing in terms of sizes, types and tenures, therefore will go a long way towards addressing the general housing needs of Caddington and Slip End. However, its location away from the settlement of Caddington means that it is potentially not suitable for addressing the needs of all older people, some of whom will require access on foot to local services. For this reason, a key focus of the housing allocations in the Neighbourhood Plan on sites in and around Caddington and Slip End will be on the needs of older people.



**POLICY CASE1: PROVISION OF HOUSING TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF OLDER PEOPLE**

Residential developments which provide accommodation specifically able to address the needs of older people will be supported. This includes the provision of housing for the over-55s, continuing care and retirement provision or care homes.

This provision will be partly met on the land at the former Heathfield School, Caddington (Policy CASE13). However, equivalent provision on other sustainable development sites will be supported, particularly if the development required by Policy CASE1 has not come forward or an alternative mix of provision has been made.

The provision of innovative and sustainable older living schemes will be promoted and supported, including larger scale schemes which may include a sustainable retirement village which is able to reduce the pressure on local housing need and enable local older people to remain in their community.

**Dwelling size**

- 3.15 Dwelling size will reflect the minimum requirements outlined in national Planning Practice Guidance and the Central Bedfordshire Design Guidance<sup>4</sup> which is a published document laying down minimum requirements for room size, the provision of parking and other facilities.

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<sup>4</sup> Central Bedfordshire (2014) *The Central Bedfordshire Design Guide: A new guide for development*



## 4 COMMUNITY AND LEISURE FACILITIES

- 4.1 The communities of Caddington and Slip End already benefit from access to a good range of high quality community and leisure facilities. Actions are in train to improve the functioning of these facilities, including the proposal to have a single booking point for all sports facilities in Caddington and Slip End.
- 4.2 In addition to this, the planned Heritage Greenway will also become a key community asset which can be used and enjoyed by all of the community, as well as fulfilling an important function of improving accessibility – this is addressed in more detail in Section 6 on Green Open Space.

### Sports facilities

- 4.3 In order to support the growing and changing population a requirement for additional community and leisure needs has been identified.
- 4.4 The Central Bedfordshire Leisure Strategy<sup>5</sup> identifies as a priority the provision of an additional cricket pitch/facilities to serve Caddington and football pitch/facilities to serve Slip End. There is also a need for additional tennis courts to serve Slip End. Proposals that include such facilities will therefore be encouraged.
- 4.5 Allocation of the Heathfield site in Caddington (Policy CASE13) would mean the loss of the adjoining sports pitch, therefore appropriate replacement or additional playing/sports facilities should be identified within the NP area. Paragraph 4.6 below may become relevant in this context. Heathfield School was closed in 2008 and the pitches de-registered with the DFE as school playing fields. Policies CASE6 and CASE13 refer.
- 4.6 It must also be recognised that there may be other needs for sports facilities that arise over the Plan period. As of early-2017 there was a potential need for a new club facility for Luton Rugby Club that could be required to vacate its existing ground outside the Neighbourhood Plan area. Relocation to Caddington and Slip End is a possibility. Whilst a site has not been agreed, this would almost certainly be located within the Green Belt. The NPPF states that new buildings to support outdoor sports are permissible within the Green Belt provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it (paragraph 89).

#### POLICY CASE2: PROVISION OF NEW SPORTS FACILITIES

Sustainable proposals to increase the provision of sports facilities within the Neighbourhood Plan area will be supported.

Proposals for an increase in the number of sports pitches, playing surfaces and sports-related facilities will be actively encouraged. An increase in the range and scope of sports facilities for all age ranges will be strongly supported including for sports such as cricket, football, badminton and rugby. Support will also be provided for proposals that provide for active leisure pursuits appropriate for older people.

<sup>5</sup> Central Bedfordshire Council (2013) *Central Bedfordshire Leisure Strategy*



#### **Provision in the Green Belt**

If new sports facilities are proposed within the Green Belt then they must be in accordance with national Green Belt policy and ensure that:

- the uses proposed do not conflict with the purposes of Green Belt land; and
- the openness of the Green Belt is preserved.

In respect of preserving the openness of the Green Belt, it must be ensured that any building is not excessive in scale and height and is designed in a way that minimises its visual impact. If the building is to provide appropriate facilities for indoor sport or indoor recreation then exceptional circumstances must be proven for its location in the Green Belt, in line with national planning policy.

### **Cycling and Bridle Paths**

- 4.7 Within the Neighbourhood Plan area there are over twenty premises where horses are stabled. In evidence provided by the British Horse Society (BHS) there is an unmet demand for additional bridle paths locally. There are currently almost no accessible bridle paths within the Plan area, therefore new and additional bridle paths will be supported via Policy CASE3 and supported by the provision of a Heritage Greenway under Policy CASE8. The impact of new bridle paths on wildlife and pedestrians will be determining factors in assessing proposals.

#### **POLICY CASE3: PROVISION OF NEW BRIDLEPATHS**

Proposals to increase the overall provision of off-road facilities for riding horses within the Neighbourhood Plan area will be supported provided there is no conflict with wildlife and amenities of pedestrians.

Where it is appropriate to do so the Heritage Greenway (Policy CASE8) will be made suitable for horse riding. Connectivity with bridle paths to the south and north of the Neighbourhood Plan area will be promoted.

- 4.8 The Neighbourhood Plan area of Caddington and Slip End is adjacent to the Chiltern Cycle Route and the plan will support the provision of new off-road cycleways to promote active sport, safer routes to schools and the use of cycles to access local services. The impact of off-road cycle paths on wildlife and pedestrians will be a major factor in determining whether proposals are acceptable. New cyclepaths are promoted under Policy CASE4 and supported by Policy CASE8.

#### **POLICY CASE4: PROVISION OF NEW CYCLEPATHS**

Proposals to increase the overall provision of off-road facilities for cycling within the Neighbourhood Plan area will be supported.

Where it is appropriate to do so the Heritage Greenway (Policy CASE8) will be made suitable for cycling. Connectivity with the Chiltern Cycle Path, Blows Down and the Luton to Dunstable Busway will be supported.



## Health facilities

- 4.9 There is a need for an expansion of primary healthcare facilities in Caddington. The existing GP practice requires expansion in order to address the needs of the growing population. However, it may be unable to expand the size of the surgery on its current site in Manor Road, which also has extremely limited parking.
- 4.10 It is vital that a local GP surgery is accessible to the majority of the population it serves. This requires a location that can be safely accessed on foot, by bicycle and by public transport. The existing site in Manor Road, Caddington is considered sustainable, but the key priority is to ensure the long-term viability of a local GP surgery.
- 4.11 At present Slip End residents use the Caddington Surgery for primary healthcare provision and there have been some complaints about transport difficulties. There have been discussions around the viability of a satellite surgery to be provided to serve the community of Slip End. Whilst such decisions ultimately rest with the GP surgery and CCG, the Neighbourhood Plan through extensive consultation has reached the view that such a satellite or remote service, whilst wanted and probably needed in Slip End, would not be approved by NHS England. The conclusion of the CaSENPSG is that improving transport linkages between Slip End and Caddington is a more deliverable outcome and is supported in this plan.
- 4.12 It is also recognised that opportunities could be secured for other forms of medical provision, including private medical care. Policy CASE1 addresses the approach to accommodation for older people in Caddington and Slip End and a proposal has been made to provide a private medical facility locally, although this has not yet proceeded to the point where it could be set out in this Neighbourhood Plan.

### **POLICY CASE5: PROVISION OF MEDICAL FACILITIES**

Development proposals that provide for new or expanded medical facilities to serve Caddington and Slip End will be strongly supported.

Such proposals must demonstrate that they are well located to serve the large majority of the communities of Caddington or Slip End in which they would be located. They must have easy and safe access on foot, by bicycle and by public transport. Sufficient parking must also be provided on site.

Where proposals are brought forward in the Green Belt, it must be demonstrated that there are no alternative sites within the settlements of Caddington or Slip End and they must be in accordance with national Green Belt policy.



### **New Village Hall in Caddington**

- 4.13 At present, Caddington lacks a village hall which can be used by the community for a range of activities. The provision of such a facility creates the opportunity not only to provide for community activities but to provide meeting space which can be hired by local businesses. This in turn will create a revenue stream which will assist with the maintenance of the facility. There is an existing facility at Collings Wells Hall in Chaul End Road, Caddington which is well used by many community groups, however a larger facility is needed to accommodate a wider range of activities such as theatre groups in a fit-for-purpose facility.
- 4.14 The site of the former Heathfield School in Caddington has been identified as a suitable location for such a facility. It is well located to serve the community, being in the centre of Caddington close to shops and other facilities. Policy CASE13 allocates the site for a mix of uses, including a village hall. If, however, this is not delivered as part of any development of the former Heathfield School, then Policy CASE6 seeks to provide general support for the provision of a facility elsewhere in Caddington.

#### **POLICY CASE6: PROVISION OF A VILLAGE HALL, CADDINGTON**

Development proposals that would provide a new village hall to serve Caddington will be strongly supported.

Such proposals must demonstrate that they are well located to serve the large majority of the community of Caddington. This must allow easy and safe access on foot, by bicycle and by public transport. Sufficient parking must also be provided on site.

Such proposals should provide for a range of community needs and also provide meeting rooms for private hire by businesses and other users.

The preferred location for such a facility is on the former Heathfield School site as part of Policy CASE13. If an alternative location is to be brought forward, it must first be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of a village hall being provided through Policy CASE13.

Where proposals are brought forward in the Green Belt, it must be demonstrated that there are no alternative sites within the settlement of Caddington and they must be in accordance with national Green Belt policy.

### **Provision for the needs of younger people**

- 4.15 A particular focus of the Neighbourhood Plan is to understand the needs of younger people and seek to address those identified needs through the policies in the Plan.
- 4.16 A number of activities have been aimed at this section of the community and a specific questionnaire was designed for children of school age. The results of this questionnaire are contained in the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement.
- 4.17 The questionnaire focussed on how young people see the community they live in and what future developments/facilities would they like to see come forward.
- 4.18 Being able to get around was an issue raised by young people. Policies CASE3 and CASE4 seek to encourage walking, riding and cycling. Improved access to schools through Safer Routes to Schools is to be delivered via Policy CASE8.



- 4.19 The Heritage Greenway will enable significantly greater access to local schools along non-highway routes. This includes access from Slip End to Caddington and eventually from Caddington to Manshead School campus on the western boundary of the plan area
- 4.20 Also, having access to sports and leisure facilities featured prominently. Increased sports facilities are being promoted through Policy CASE2. Also, whilst the former Heathfield School site in Caddington currently provides for a Youth Club, Policy CASE6 and Policy CASE13 aim to provide improved facilities through the support for and re-provision of a modern, multi-purpose village hall.



## 5 GREEN SPACE

- 5.1 A key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is to retain what is good about Caddington and Slip End. One of the most important aspects of this is the high-quality environment of Caddington and Slip End and its setting as settlements in an attractive rural environment. The plan recognises the need to retain this and, where possible, to enhance the environment of the two settlements.

### Local Green Spaces

- 5.2 One of the key features that gives Caddington its rural identity is the central location of The Green, with the village spreading out from this central point.

#### View across Caddington Green



- 5.3 Under the NPPF, Neighbourhood Plans have the opportunity to designate Local Green Spaces which are of particular importance to the local community. This will afford protection from development other than in very special circumstances. Paragraph 77 of the NPPF says that Local Green Spaces should only be designated:

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

- 5.4 The Green is a very striking feature at the heart of Caddington village, well maintained to give pleasure to both visitors and residents alike. The Green defines Caddington as a village and is a much-loved feature of



the area. It provides space for many local events including an annual village day, fairs and daily recreation for residents and visitors. It is therefore allocated as Local Green Space.

## **POLICY CASE7: LOCAL GREEN SPACE - THE GREEN, CADDINGTON**

The Green in Caddington, as shown on the Policies Map, is designated as a Local Green Space.

Proposals for built development on The Green will not be permitted unless it is of a limited nature and it can be clearly demonstrated that it is required to enhance the role and function of The Green as a high-quality public open space.

5.5 The Neighbourhood Plan area has a number of open spaces which it wishes to retain because they are vital to the vitality and sustainability of the communities that use them on a daily basis, these include:

- Rushmore Park play area – Caddington Parish with play and multi-use games area (MUGA) facilities
- Elm Avenue Play area – Caddington Parish open space with play equipment
- Woodland off Dunstable Road, Caddington above Manshead School – owned by Central Bedfordshire, an open area of woodland accessible to local people
- Duck Pond, Little Green Lane, Caddington – a small pond & recreational area adjacent to the highway
- Caddington Sports and Social Club – owned by Caddington Parish Council this has sports, event & bar facilities and two pitches
- Slip End Playing Fields – cricket, tennis & a sports pavilion (Peter Edwards Hall)
- Slip End Play area, Markyate Rd, Slip End - adjacent to the village hall in Slip End

## **Heritage Greenway**

5.6 The provision of a Heritage Greenway is one of the most exciting projects to come forward in Caddington and Slip End. It was identified through the Neighbourhood Plan process by the local community which highlighted the importance of:

- the area's rural setting,
- the area's landscape, wildlife and heritage value; and
- increasing the provision of safe and enjoyable walking, cycling and horse riding links.

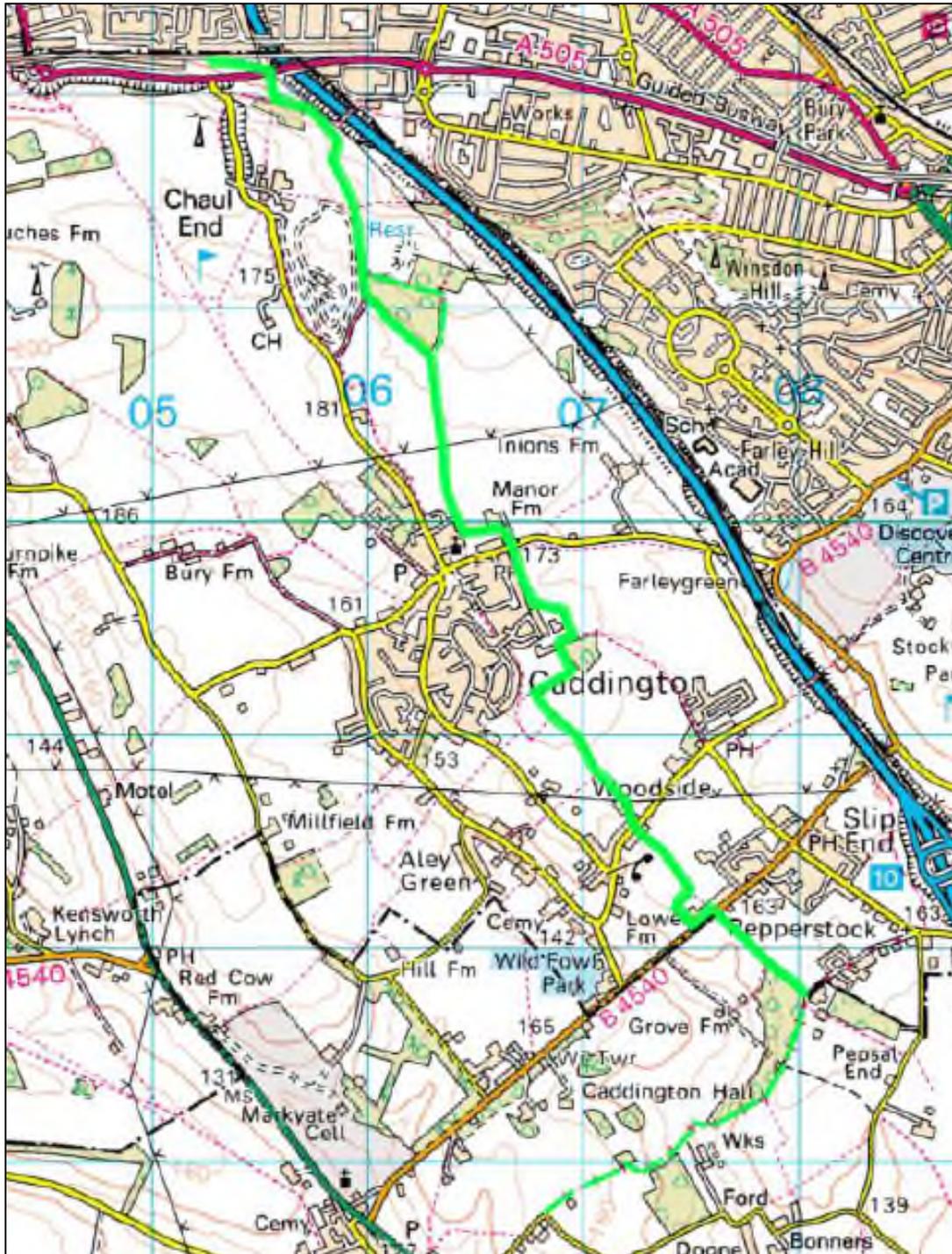
5.7 The Heritage Greenway will therefore provide an 'easy access' route for pedestrians, cyclists, and where possible, horse-riders. It will seek to celebrate and secure the rural setting of Caddington and Slip End, which has high heritage, wildlife and landscape value.

5.8 The Heritage Greenway through Policy CASE8 will also provide access to the rich archaeological heritage in the area. Where possible ancient sites will be marked and information boards provided.

5.9 Along the Heritage Greenway route new natural and wildlife enclaves will be sought to increase the habitats for indigenous species. We will seek to use this initiative to extend, enhance and link ecological networks within the plan area



Figure 6.1: Main route of Heritage Greenway



OS Licence No 100049029

- 5.10 The route, as shown in Figure 6.1, will link the communities of Caddington and Slip End to the new community at Chaul End and with surrounding areas of heritage and wildlife interest. It will also provide a link with the Luton-Dunstable guided busway. Opportunities will be sought to protect and celebrate the area's rich heritage and to enhance and create habitats and landscape features. Much more than a linear



access path, the Heritage Greenway will seek to be a corridor of great environmental value, with many links to adjacent destinations and features of interest. The background to this is set out in the Heritage Greenway Proposal which has been endorsed by both Parish Councils.

- 5.11 The scheme has been designed to be delivered in phases and the necessary funding for some phases has been identified through S106 agreements. It is important therefore that the delivery and continuing benefit of the Heritage Greenway is not impacted detrimentally by development. Further funding streams will be actively sought, particularly where they can be linked to development proposals.

#### **POLICY CASE8: HERITAGE GREENWAY**

Development proposals within the plan area will be expected to contribute towards the cost of the Heritage Greenway.

Development proposals close or immediately adjacent to the route of the Heritage Greenway will be expected to demonstrate how they can provide positive benefits to the Heritage Greenway. Such positive benefits could include:

- dedicated pedestrian, cycle and horse riding access;
- improved access to and protection of wildlife;
- improved access to and protection of heritage assets.

Any development proposals which are likely to have a detrimental impact in respect of any of these matters will be refused.



## 6 SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

- 6.1 Caddington and Slip End Neighbourhood Plan seeks to be the greenest Neighbourhood Plan prepared to date. The ultimate aim is not only that the communities of Caddington and Slip End are energy self-sufficient but also that they become net exporters of renewable energy.
- 6.2 A solar farm on land at Millfield Farm in Caddington commenced operation in 2014 and is expected to provide an income of £17,000 per annum to Caddington. Moreover, a second phase of this scheme has been granted planning permission and will mean that the whole Neighbourhood Plan area will be virtually energy self-sufficient.



Phase 1 – Millfield Lane Solar Farm

- 6.3 The objective is to create the opportunity for more community renewable energy schemes to come forward so that Caddington and Slip End can be net exporters of energy to the National Grid.
- 6.4 Additionally, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to encourage a more diverse range of green energy technologies which would make Caddington and Slip End's ambition to become energy self-sufficient more robust. As a matter of principle, the Neighbourhood Plan supports proposals for a new commercial renewable energy system subject to detailed planning and environmental impact assessments. It is not envisaged that any renewable technology would utilise wind power because of the visual impact on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and issues relating to the proximity to Luton Airport that a wind turbine could have.
- 6.5 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to make community and public buildings in Caddington and Slip-End as sustainable as possible. There is already an excellent example of this at Caddington Village School. One of the benefits that a community trust income such as that in place offers is the opportunity to promote smaller scale energy schemes such as roof-top solar systems. The intention is to place these on all community buildings across the Neighbourhood Plan area but also encourage their installation on private houses.
- 6.6 Policy CASE9 supports the development of community energy schemes, particularly those that are ultimately community owned. A wider action from the Neighbourhood Plan is to explore the potential to utilise these assets to invest in bulk buying schemes for photovoltaic (PV) solar, insulation of houses, etc. Reference should also be made to the Central Bedfordshire guidance on Wind and Solar Energy.



**POLICY CASE9: SUSTAINABLE ENERGY**

Proposals to bring forward community renewable energy schemes, particularly where they are community owned, will be strongly supported.

Renewable energy schemes will be supported across the plan area and specifically household photovoltaic (PV) schemes will be promoted and supported.



## 7 COMMERCIAL AND RETAIL

### Provision of appropriate business accommodation

- 7.1 One of the main objectives of the NPPF is to build a strong, competitive economy. In more rural areas, the aim is equally to support a prosperous economy as part of that. It states that, “local and Neighbourhood Plans should:
- *support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;*
  - *promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;*
  - *support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. This should include supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres; and*
  - *promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.*
- 7.2 The community of Caddington and Slip End – both residents and existing businesses – considers that the first and last of these objectives are the most important. Equally though, there is an important balance that the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to achieve. It wishes to encourage the growth of appropriate commercial activities which create jobs for local people.
- 7.3 Whilst Caddington and Slip End does have a relatively limited employment base, the analysis in Section 2 and Appendix A showed that a small but significant proportion of people work from home. For many such employers, there is an inevitable restriction in working from home, not least when it is necessary to have meetings. Policies CASE6 and CASE10 provide the opportunity for a new village hall in Caddington to provide meeting rooms available for hire to small businesses.
- 7.4 Also over time, as home-based businesses expand, there is a need to move into dedicated commercial premises. A business survey carried out in April 2012 demonstrated that there was a thriving small business community in the area and that businesses forecast a requirement for additional office and business space over the next few years.
- 7.5 Cotswold Business Park is a provider of commercial business space in the Neighbourhood Plan area. It is a popular business park and has a number of businesses providing a range of services and jobs. Early on in the development of the plan the owners of the Business Park stated that they wished to expand the size and scale of the park. More recent evidence suggests though that the adjacent development at Eden Brae has absorbed that capacity requirement.
- 7.6 The Eden Brae Business Park has been constructed on the former Wyevale Nursery site in Dunstable Road, Caddington. It contains 4 x 2 storey office blocks with a total of 1,044 sq.m. of B1 office space
- 7.7 Outside of Cotswold Business Park, there is general support for the provision of expanded B-class employment floorspace within the settlements of Caddington and Slip End.



**POLICY CASE10: PROVISION OF NEW COMMERCIAL FLOORSPACE**

Development proposals for the provision of new B-class commercial floorspace within the settlements of Caddington and Slip End will be supported. This is subject to the demonstration that proposals will not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring users or unacceptable impacts on traffic and highways and pedestrian safety.

Development proposals for extensions to existing B-Class commercial buildings outside the settlements of Caddington and Slip End will be supported if they are proportionate to the original building and not harmful to the openness of the Green Belt and comply with the other above stipulations.

Development proposals for the provision of new B-class commercial floorspace shall only be acceptable if they fulfil the following criteria:

- if within the Green Belt the site must be on previously developed land and the proposal must not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt; and
- there is a demonstrable need for such a facility identified through up-to-date evidence; and
- there are no alternative sites within the settlement areas of Caddington and Slip End; and
- it can be demonstrated that it is not possible to intensify the use within the existing site.

**Retail provision**

- 7.8 For small, rural villages such as Caddington and Slip End to thrive, it is important that their existing retail and service provision is retained and, where possible, enhanced. If existing rural facilities within walking distance are lost, it could contribute to social exclusion, particularly for the elderly and those without access to a car.
- 7.9 Retail premises such as farm shops, which are located outside of rural settlements can also play an important role in supporting the rural economy and providing a sustainable source of locally produced food.
- 7.10 However, it is vital to get the right balance – encouraging large retail provision in small centres would be inappropriate and contrary to national planning policy which seeks to focus significant new retail in the largest centres. The focus of the Neighbourhood Plan is therefore on protecting and providing for small scale retail and services.
- 7.11 National planning policy allows for the conversion of retail space to residential use. Therefore, it is sensible to adopt a flexible approach to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan area has adequate space for local retail services to thrive.
- 7.12 The General Permitted Development Order (GPDO 2015) allows for the change of use of retail space. Policy CASE11 provides for new retail space and the protection of existing retail space, subject to its continuing viability.



#### **POLICY CASE11: RETAIL PROVISION**

In order to support vibrant and diverse villages and the rural economy, proposals for retail uses within existing villages and hamlets will be approved subject to the following criteria:

- the proposal is of a suitable scale;
- the site is an appropriate location; and
- the proposal would not result in unsustainable levels of traffic generation.

Proposals for retail premises such as local farm shops which are located outside of settlements will also be considered against the above criteria.

Proposals for the re-development of shops or public houses in the Neighbourhood Area which would result in the loss of such facilities, will not be permitted unless:

- there are other facilities performing the same or similar function within easy walking distance of the community; and
- the applicant provides evidence that there is no realistic prospect of the use continuing, even if permission is refused.

### **High speed broadband**

- 7.13 The modern economy is changing and increasingly needs good communications infrastructure as a basic requirement. As noted earlier in this section, people are working differently to a generation ago - in the Neighbourhood Plan area, 4% of people work from home and nearly 12% are self-employed. Of these self-employed people, over 9% have no employees so effectively work for themselves with no support. Commonly this is in service activities that simply require access to a computer and a broadband connection.
- 7.14 The need for high speed broadband to serve Caddington and Slip End is therefore paramount. The provision across the Neighbourhood Plan area is patchy, with large parts of the village of Caddington achieving speeds in excess of 48 megabits per second (Mbps), while more rural areas and parts of the village of Slip End remain below recognised standards of acceptable access.
- 7.15 Having recognised that there is a significant gap in availability of basic and superfast broadband, particularly in rural areas where British Telecom (BT) and other national providers have not invested in upgrades to the network, Government have allocated £530m through the Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) programme to deliver superfast broadband to 90% of premises by 2015 and have recently allocated an additional £250m to increase coverage to 95% of premises by 2017 and 99% by 2018.
- 7.16 Whilst BT has an obligation to provide a landline to every household in the UK and developers are expected to want to facilitate high speed broadband provision otherwise their developments will be substantially less marketable, there have been instances where developers have not contacted BT early enough in the process for fibre and ducting to be laid, or they have a national agreement with a cable provider that is not active in the area, leaving new housing developments with little or no connections.



- 7.17 Policy CASE12 provides the opportunity to introduce acceptable connection speeds as part of new development. It also enables the BDUK scheme, to which Central Bedfordshire Council is signed up, to provide a roadmap for upgrading the whole plan area.
- 7.18 Opportunities will be sought to bring forward upgrades to the network through development schemes/Section 106 and, if in place, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions.

#### **POLICY CASE12: HIGH SPEED BROADBAND**

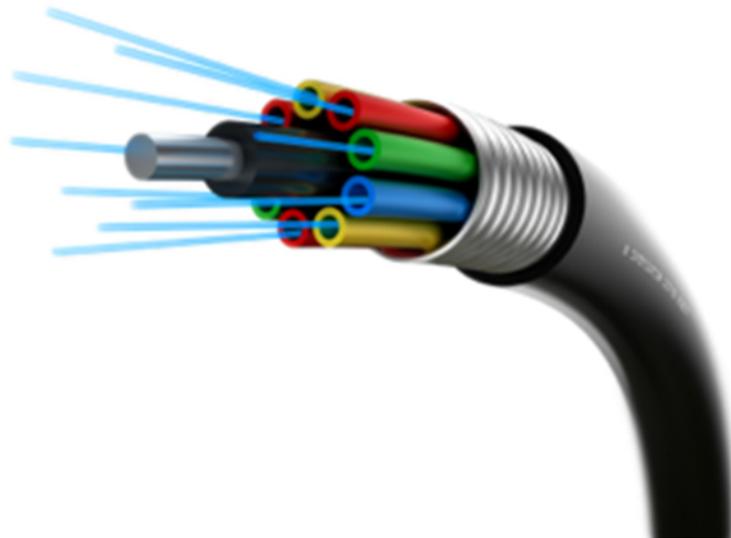
New residential and employment development will be expected to include provision for superfast next generation broadband infrastructure.

This should ideally facilitate a fibre to the premise solution, or the equivalent technology, but as a minimum this should be based on a fibre to the cabinet network, or the equivalent technology. This should facilitate the provision of the highest level of broadband speeds to consumers.

Provision should be made with minimal disruption and minimal need for reconstruction, and allow for future growth/improvements in service infrastructure/broadband service. It must be installed on an open access basis.

If superfast broadband is not available at the time of construction, then the necessary infrastructure must be installed to ensure that superfast broadband can be accessed when it is ready.

Where the minimum standards are not met, evidence will be required to demonstrate why this would not be feasible or viable.



## 8 TRANSPORT

- 8.1 A number of identified transport issues can be addressed through existing and new policies. These issues include:
- Transport pinch point on Chaul End Road – Central Bedfordshire Council has approved a traffic management scheme to deal with this as part of the Chaul End development.
  - Improvements to bus services is a high priority for the community but difficult to achieve without significant and ongoing funding streams. The Chaul End development will provide additional services through the provision of a community bus service running between Chaul End and Pepperstock.
- 8.2 The consultation responses support better off-road access to services including schools. As articulated in Policy CASE8 significantly improved cycling, walking and riding routes will be supported.
- 8.3 Schemes such as the parking and road safety project in Slip End (completed in May 2015) will be supported and additional funding through the Rural Transport Match Funding Scheme will add to safer roads in Caddington in 2015/16.
- 8.4 It is not considered necessary to have a specific policy around the Transport theme.



Traffic calming – Markyate Road, Slip End, delivered through a partnership between Slip End PC & Central Bedfordshire

## 9 SITE ALLOCATIONS

- 9.1 The CaSENPSPG invited sites to be put forward for development in 2013 and embarked upon an assessment process of 30 sites, taking into account the location of the site, whether the site was suitable for the type of development proposed and whether constraints including vehicular access, landscape impact and flooding would be a barrier to development. Full details of the assessment process are contained in the Sustainability Appraisal.
- 9.2 Community consultation was then undertaken in early 2015 to take into account views from local people and a short list of sites drawn up. The only suitable site for development within the existing settlement (and not in Green Belt) is the former Heathfield School site in Caddington and this site is therefore allocated for development. The other remaining site identified – land to the rear of Slip End School - is in the Green Belt.
- 9.3 The NPPF only allows development in the Green Belt in ‘very special circumstances’ through planning applications and the altering of Green Belt boundaries to facilitate future development in ‘exceptional circumstances’. In both cases, it is the Local Planning Authority (i.e. Central Bedfordshire Council) who have the responsibility for making these decisions.
- 9.4 This Neighbourhood Plan seeks to propose that the land to the rear of Slip End School is allocated for future development, acknowledging that Central Bedfordshire Council will be the determining authority and ultimately will choose whether to remove the site from the Green Belt in order that the allocation can be addressed through a development proposal.

### Former Heathfield School site, Caddington

- 9.5 This is a redundant school site which includes playing fields, playgrounds and the former school buildings. The school ceased to operate in 2008 and now the existing buildings and grounds are extensively used for community purposes, including a youth club, toddlers club and the village fete. It is centrally located in Caddington and is therefore considered to be an important asset providing for community activities and needs. It is not within the Green Belt.
- 9.6 In recognition of the need to balance the value to the community of the existing uses on the site and the requirement to ensure that any development is deliverable, the site is considered suitable for a residential-led, mixed use development. The site’s location means that it is ideally located to provide for the needs of older people. The Heathfield site is considered able to accommodate around 100 older people dwellings with a refreshed community facility (village hall) on the site.
- 9.7 This would be a mix of housing suitable for older people, and would be located to the rear of the site. In order to ensure that this addresses the identified need for such housing for local people, 10% of the units built should be nominated for people that currently live within the Neighbourhood Plan area<sup>6</sup>.
- 9.8 At the front of the site would be a new village hall which is needed to accommodate the existing community uses on the site as well as a range of other users within the wider community. The village hall would be supported by an area for parking. In order to ensure that the ongoing running and maintenance costs of the village hall can be met, it should include meeting rooms that can be hired out. These rooms could be hired by local businesses and community groups. The growth and strength of the local micro-

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<sup>6</sup> This would be split evenly between the parishes of Caddington and Slip End



business sector in the Neighbourhood Plan area, and in particular the rise in self-employment, means that there is a demand for meeting space locally.

- 9.9 More detail is included on the village hall in Policy CASE6.
- 9.10 This development would require the demolition of the existing school building which is in a reasonably poor state of repair. Part of the site sits within the conservation area so it is important that any design is in keeping with the conservation area and that development on land adjacent to it does not affect its setting.
- 9.11 Development of the site would mean that the adjoining sports pitch would be lost, therefore appropriate and replacement playing/sports pitch should be provided before any development is occupied at the site, provided that the affordability envelope for a refreshed community facility is not harmed.

### **POLICY CASE13: LAND AT FORMER HEATHFIELD SCHOOL, CADDINGTON**

Planning permission will be granted for residential development on land at the former Heathfield School, Caddington, subject to the following criteria:

- the provision of dwellings specifically designed to address older persons' needs in accordance with Policy CASE1 of this Plan; and
- the provision of a new village hall, including meeting rooms for community and commercial hire, and appropriate on-site parking for users; and
- provided that the affordability envelope for a replacement community facility is not impaired then the re-provision of alternative playing/sports pitches, to an equivalent scale and quality, in a location that is accessible for the community of Caddington would be sought.

### **Land to the rear of Slip End School, Slip End**

- 9.12 With the growth in population over the Plan period, the Plan needs to ensure that there are effective solutions for delivering sufficient school places to serve the local community. At present, Central Bedfordshire Council does not have a shortage of school places but this position could change over the Plan period.
- 9.13 Slip End School has land adjacent within the Green Belt which could be used should the school need to expand. It is therefore important that this land is allocated for this use, should it be needed.
- 9.14 In order to make effective use of the land and this site, there is also the opportunity to deliver housing on part of the site. This is the sole site identified as suitable for allocation in Slip End for residential development; therefore, it is important that opportunity is taken to address the growing residential needs of the local community. This site is considered able to accommodate up to 150 dwellings together with a land allocation to Slip End School. The site is in the Green Belt and as such, cannot be allocated through this Neighbourhood Plan. The Green Belt Justification Paper shows that the site makes limited or no contributions to the purposes of Green Belt. Therefore, should the emerging Central Bedfordshire Local Plan alter the Green Belt boundaries and allocate this site for housing and an extension to the school grounds, such a proposal would be supported



## **POLICY CASE14: LAND TO THE REAR OF SLIP END SCHOOL, SLIP END**

Residential development on land to the rear of Slip End School, Slip End, will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- the provision of approximately 120 - 150 dwellings and;
- the provision of land to allow for the future expansion of Slip End School



## 10 NON-LAND USE ISSUES AND DELIVERY STRATEGY

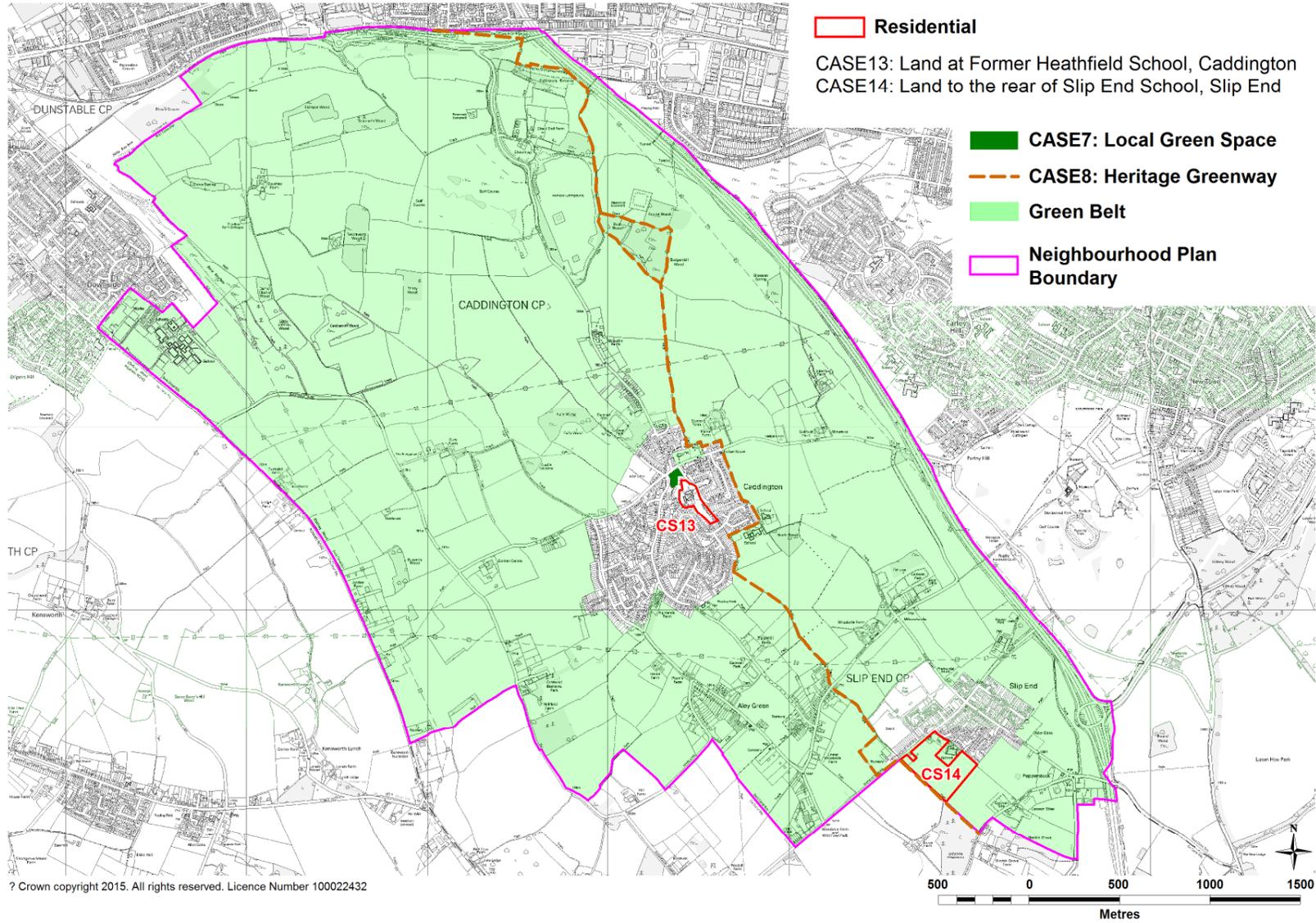
- 10.1 There are a number of issues that have been raised through the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan that are not directly related to land-use matters (although several indirectly relate to the use of land in some form). As such, they are not matters that can be addressed directly by the provision of a planning policy in the Neighbourhood Plan. However, this is not to say that these are not important matters and it is important that a strategy for dealing with these matters is assembled and taken forward. In doing so, this will help to achieve the vision and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan.



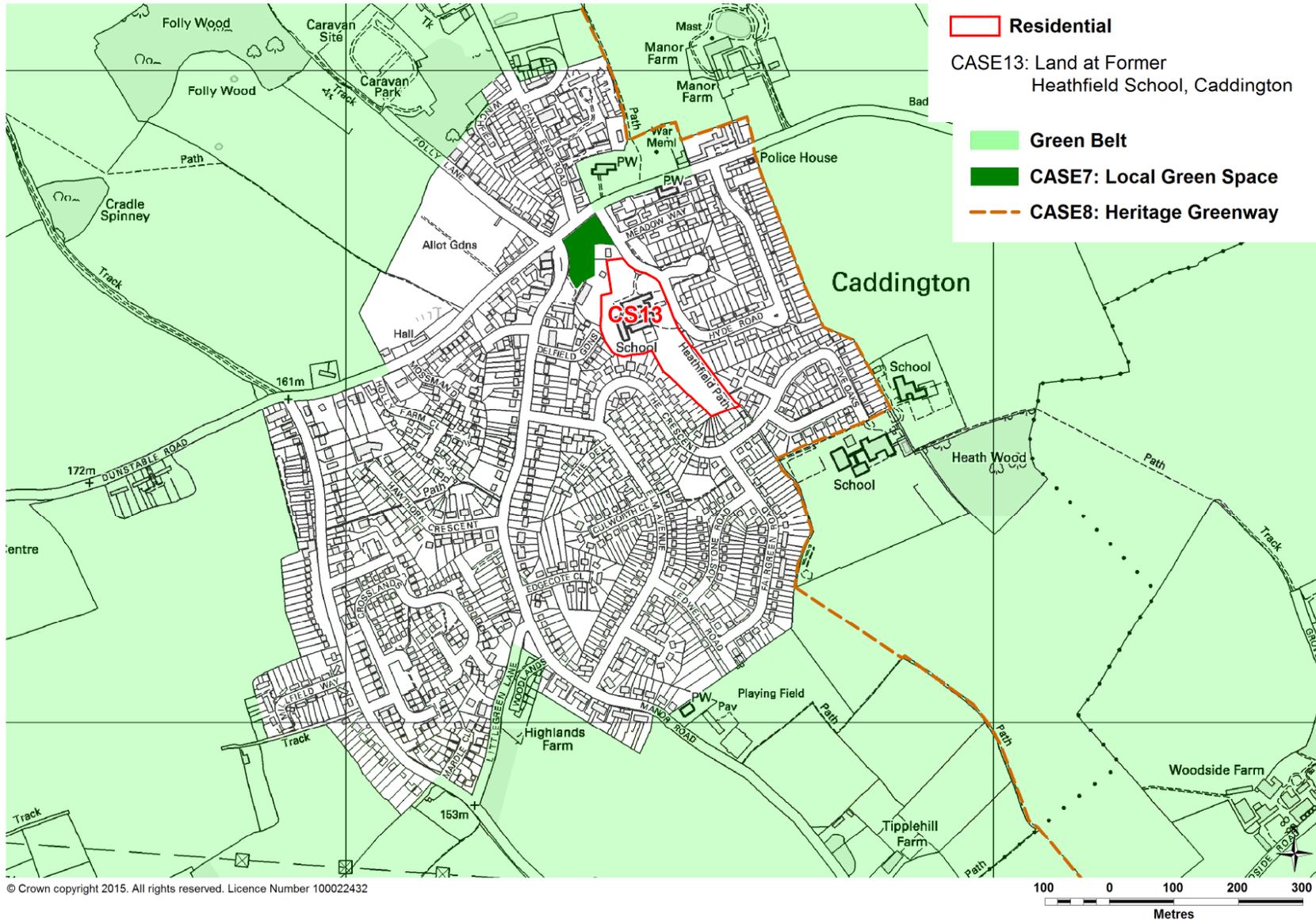
**11 POLICIES MAPS**



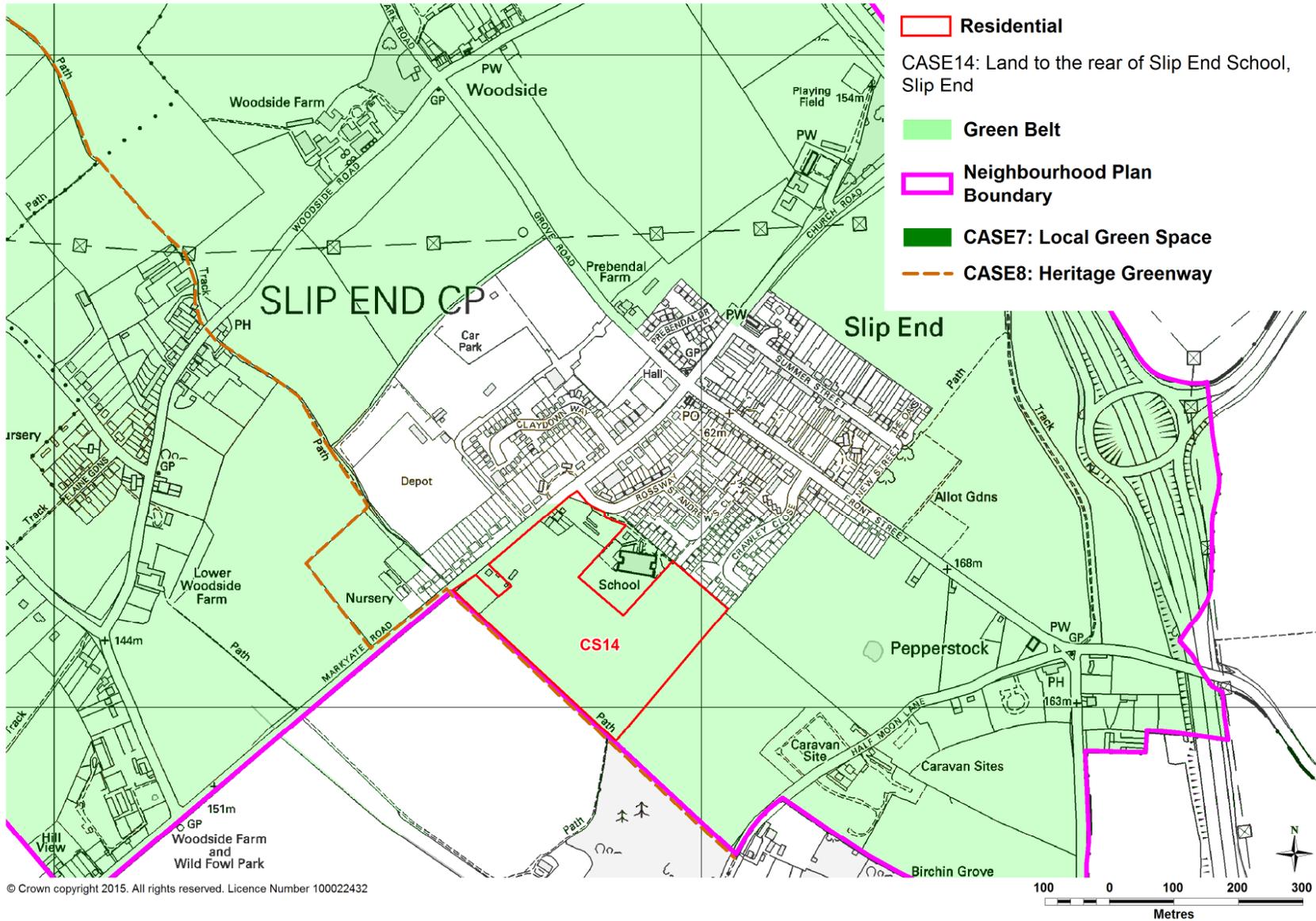
# Neighbourhood Plan for Caddington & Slip End



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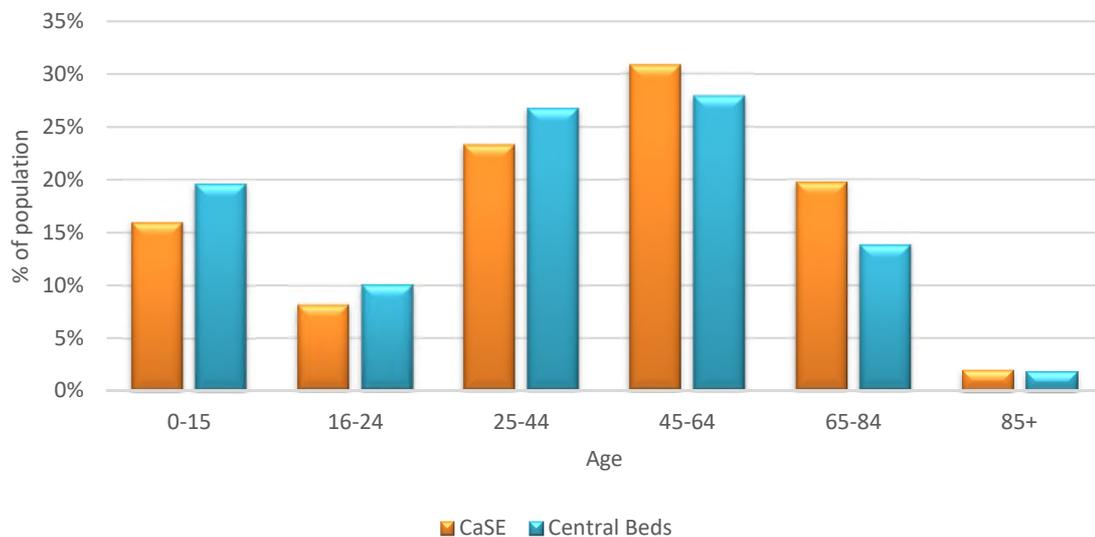


## 12 APPENDIX A POPULATION INFORMATION

### Population and households

- 12.1 The 2011 Census shows the population of the parishes as 5,534. As detailed in Figure A1, compared to Central Bedfordshire, the parishes have a low proportion of both young adults aged 16-24 and adults between 25 and 44 years of age. This suggests a comparatively low proportion of young families, reinforced by the equally low proportion of those aged 0-15.
- 12.2 By contrast, the parishes have a high proportion of adults aged 45 to 84, suggesting that a good number of people will either approach or be of retirement age over the plan period.

**Figure A1: Population profile, 2011**



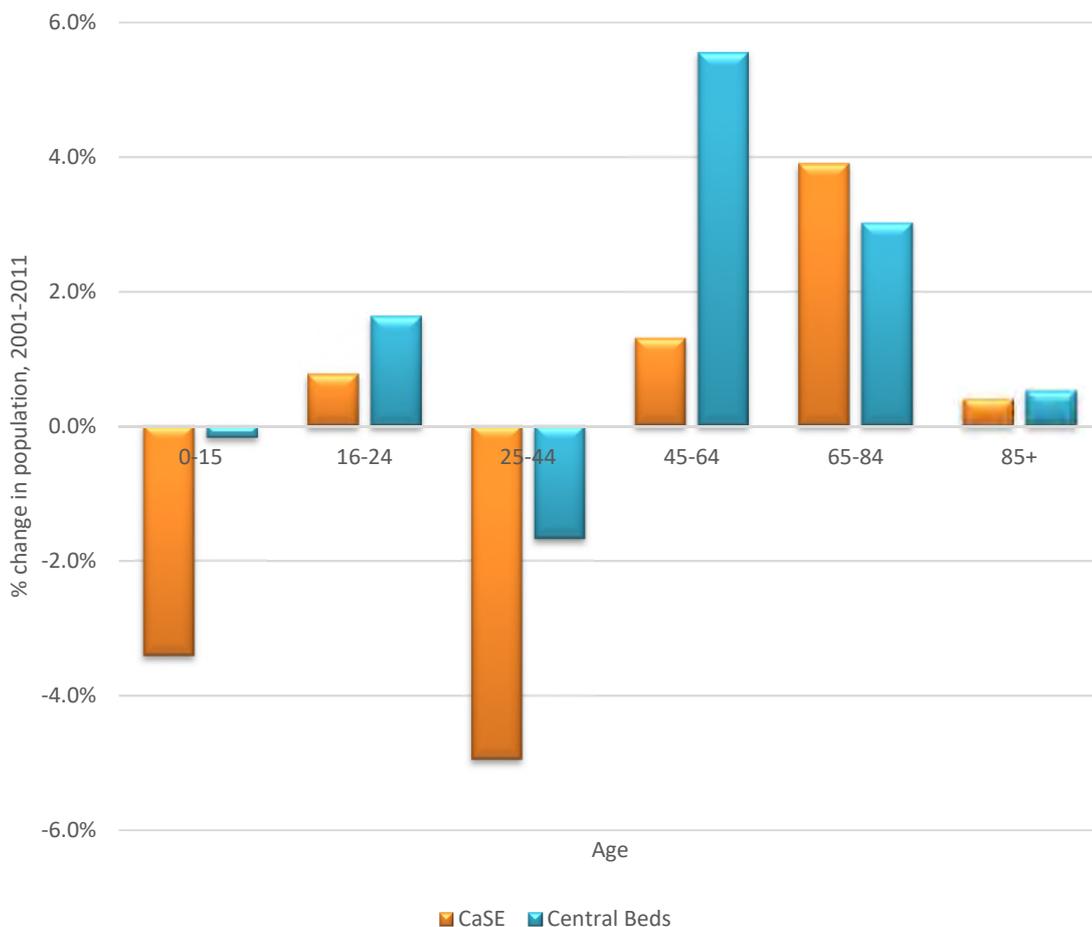
Source: 2011 Census

- 12.3 Since 2001, as shown in Figure A2, the population has fallen by 112 people, a -2.0% change compared to 8.9% growth in Central Bedfordshire as a whole. This is a very significant trend which is mostly explained by the ageing population not being replaced by younger people. If such a trend were to continue over the long term then it would have considerable negative consequences for the community of Caddington and Slip End. It also shows that there is likely to be a growing need for specialist support for the ageing population.
- 12.4 The total number of households in the two parishes fell by 22 in the ten years to 2011, a fall of 0.9%.
- 12.5 The fall in population between 2001 and 2011 was accounted for by children aged up to 15 and the age group of their parents, i.e. ages 25-44. By contrast, the population of retirement age grew strongly.
- 12.6 In particular, the growth in 65 – 84 year olds provides both a challenge and an opportunity for the CaSENSPG to devise policies which address the demonstrable housing issues while providing appropriate accommodation for younger families.



- 12.7 The results from a series of consultation events, supported by the housing needs survey, indicate that an increase is required in the provision of dedicated and fit-for-purpose accommodation for older people who wish to move from their family home, while maintaining a degree of independent living locally.
- 12.8 A direct quote from a retired gentleman from Caddington, when asked if a village version of a ‘McCarthy and Stone’ older living accommodation was a good idea, *“Yes please where do I sign up – I want to stay in the village, but I want to move to something I can live in until I pass away and then a family can move into my house”*
- 12.9 The total number of households in the two parishes fell by 22 in the ten years to 2011, a fall of 0.9%.

**Figure A2: Change in population, 2001-2011**

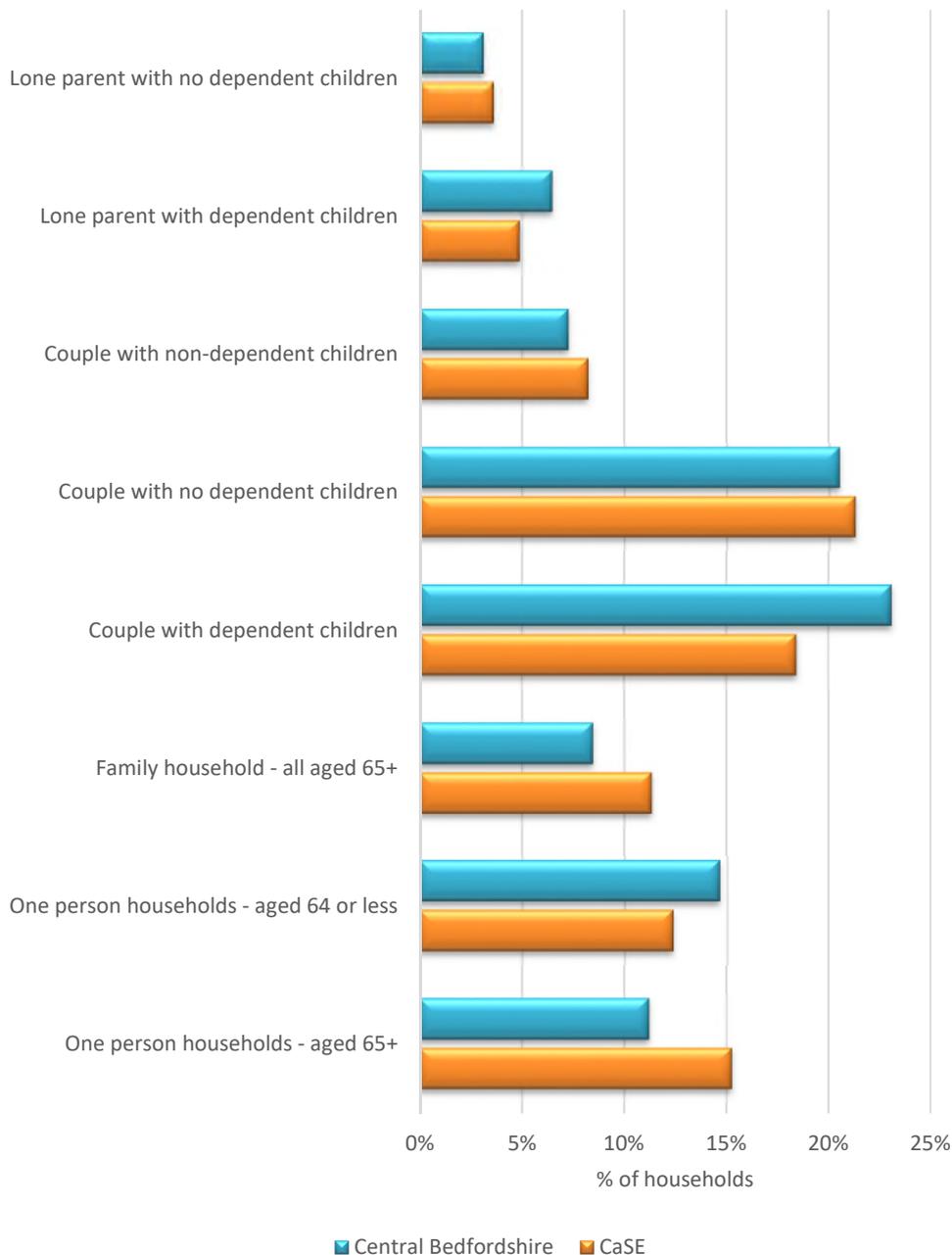


Source: 2011 and 2001 Census

- 12.10 Figure A3 bears this out. It shows that the parishes of Caddington and Slip End have a comparatively low proportion of couples with dependent children but a high proportion of one person households aged 65+, i.e. retirees. Again, as these people living alone continue to age, they are likely to require specialist support which could range from private housing for older people through to full-time care.



**Figure A3: Composition of households, 2011**



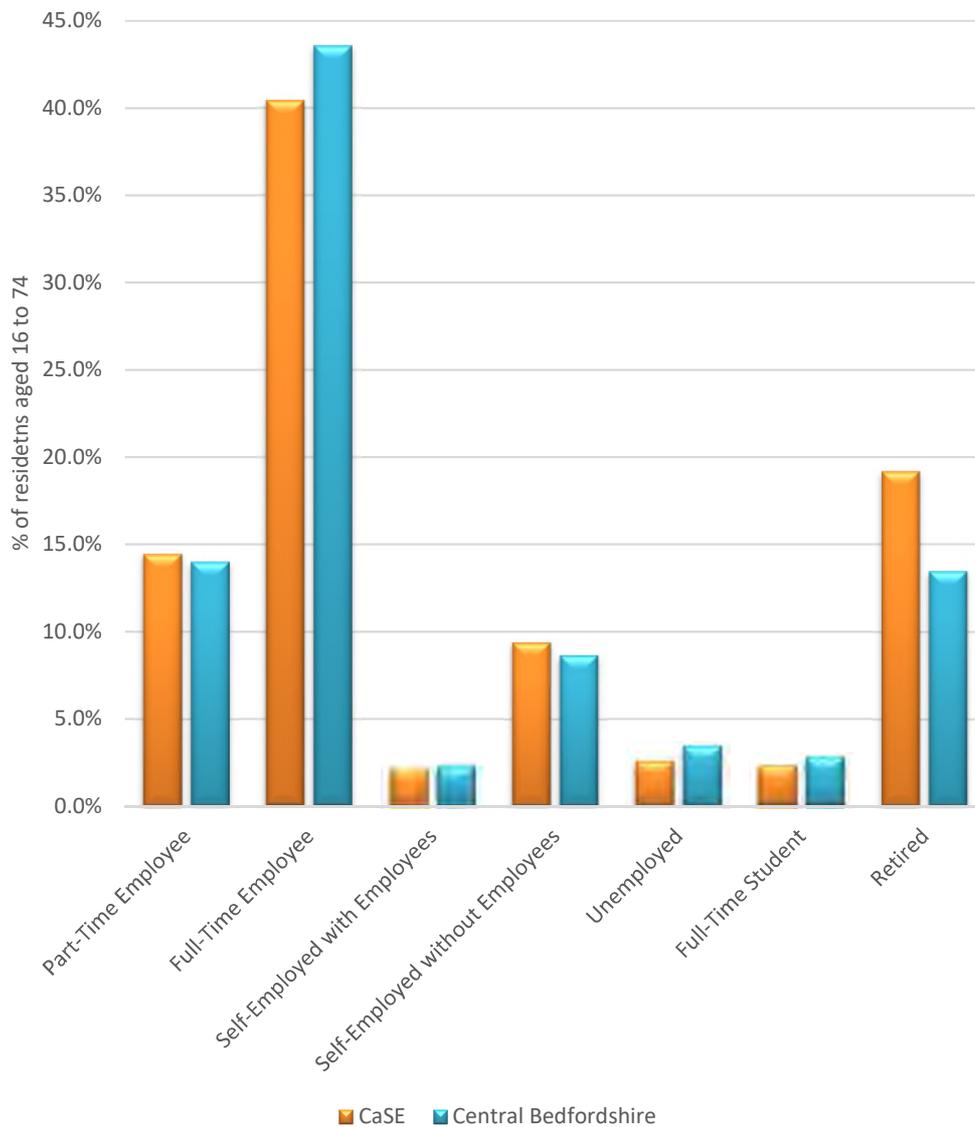
Source: 2011 Census

**Work**

12.11 71% of the population of working age in CaSE is economically active, which is below the Central Bedfordshire average of nearly 75%. The reason for this, as shown in Figure A.4, is the high proportion of retirees (who are classed as economically inactive). The proportion of people in full-time employment is quite low but this is partly offset by the number of self-employed people, particularly those without employees. This points to a significant number of people working for themselves, many from their own homes.



**Figure A4: Economic activity, 2011**

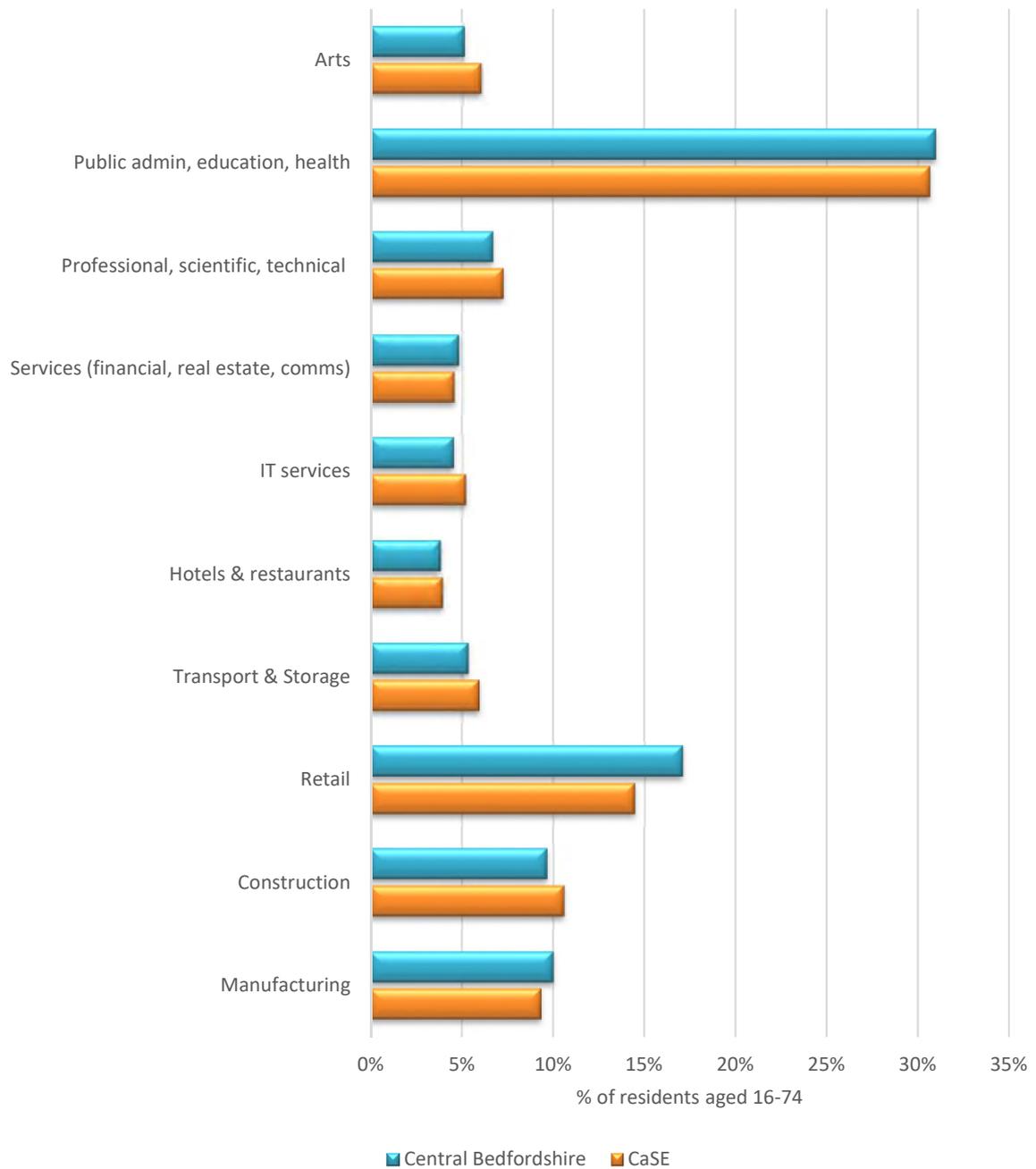


Source: 2011 Census

12.12 The sectoral profile of the workforce of Caddington and Slip End is very closely aligned to that of Central Bedfordshire (as shown in Figure A5). It has a low proportion working in retail but a good proportion working in higher value sectors such as professional, scientific and technical and IT services.



**Figure A5: Type of industry, 2011**

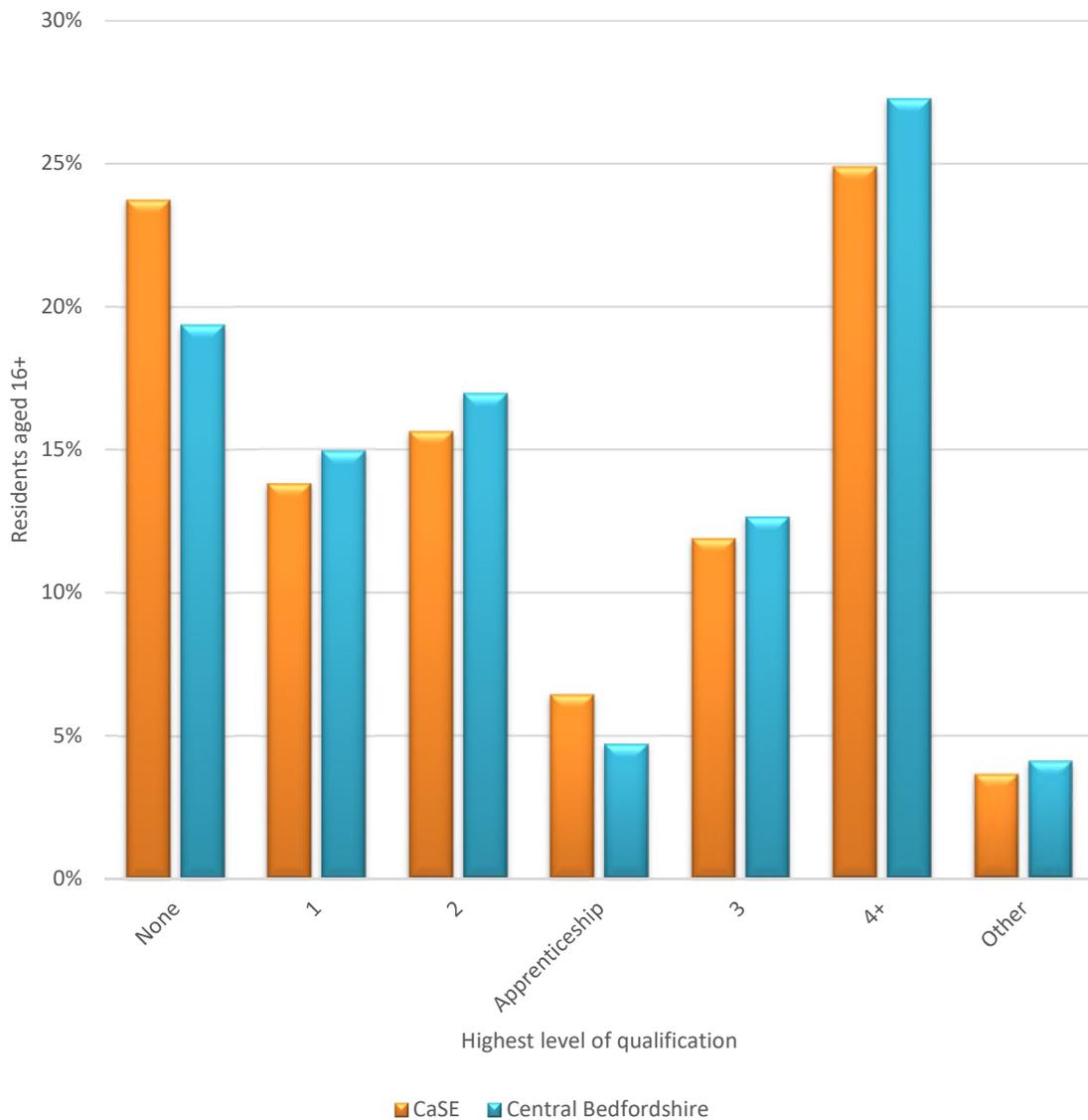


Source: 2011 Census

12.13 Figure A6 shows that the proportion of people with high levels of qualification, i.e. Level 4 or more, which is educated to at least degree level, are below Central Bedfordshire. By contrast, the proportion of people with lower levels of qualification is very high, at nearly 25%.



**Figure A6: Qualifications of residents aged 16 and over**



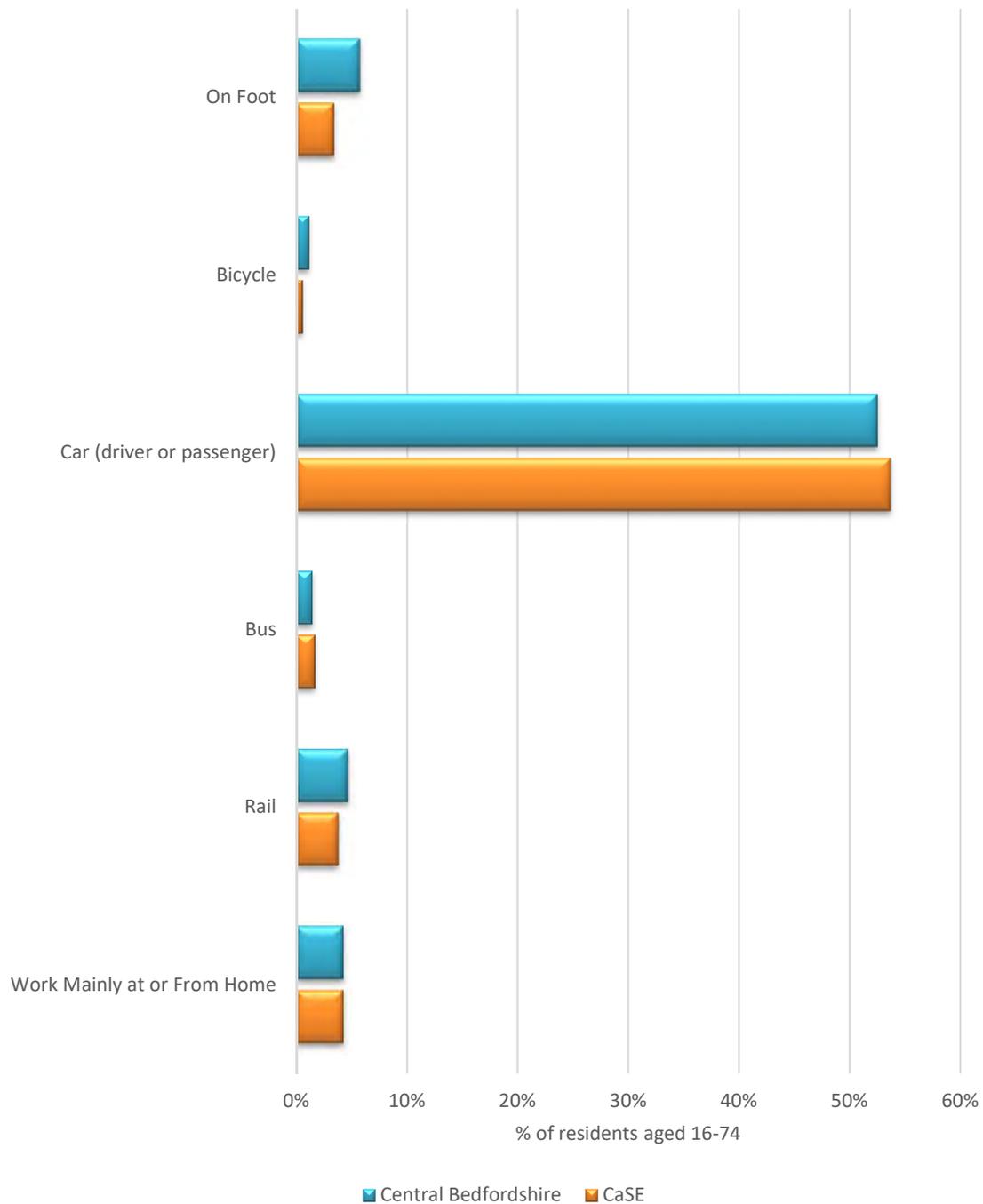
Source: 2011 Census

12.14 Figure A7 shows that the large majority of those in work travel to work by car, and do so as the driver of that car, which may be a result of the inadequate public transport. The numbers of people that travel to work on foot or by bicycle is low, highlighting the limited number of job opportunities that are available locally.

12.15 This general picture is further supported by Census figures on access to a car within households. On average, each Caddington and Slip End household has access to 1.56 cars. This compares to 1.50 cars per household in Central Bedfordshire. This represents quite levels of car ownership which is unsurprising for a rural community but does highlight the relatively limited alternative options available for people to travel around to access employment, services and leisure activities.



Figure A7: Mode of transport to work



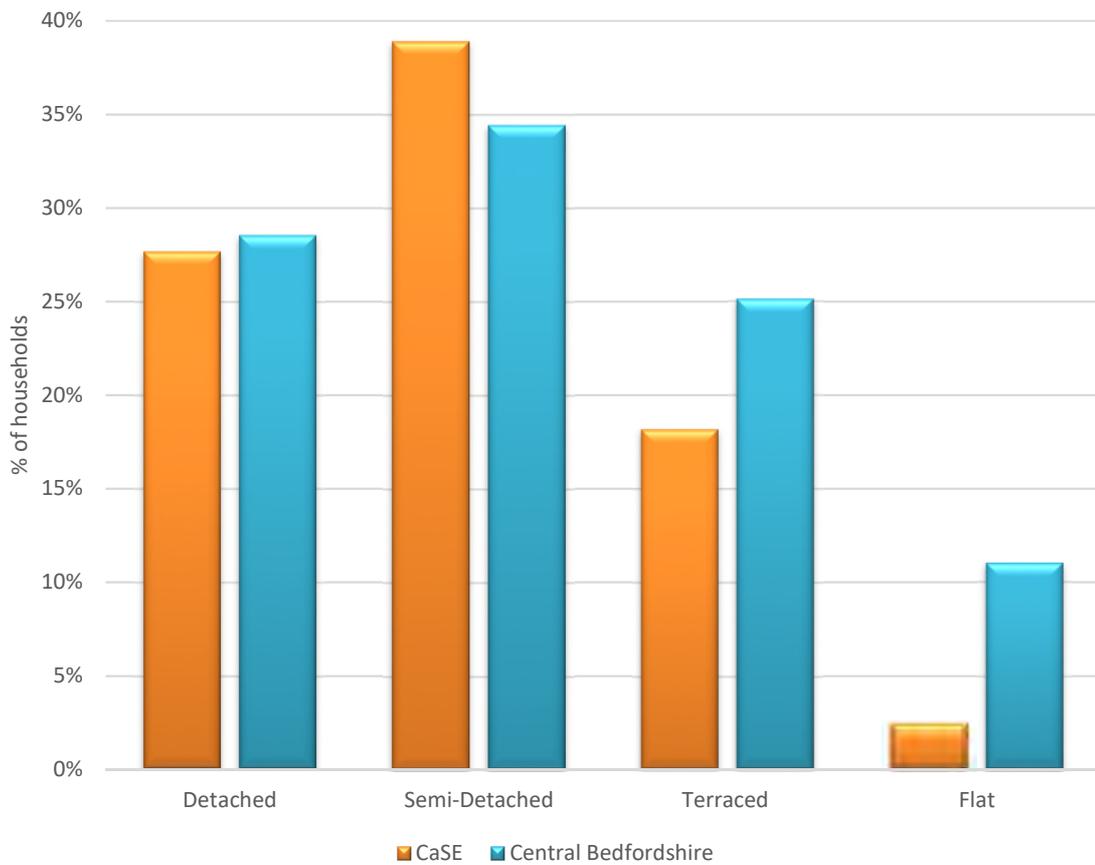
Source: 2011 Census

## Housing

12.16 The parishes of Caddington and Slip End are dominated by semi-detached housing, representing nearly 40% of their housing stock. However, there is also a significant proportion (nearly 30%) of detached housing. By contrast, the proportion of terraced housing and, in particular, flatted development is very low.



**Figure A8: Type of dwelling**



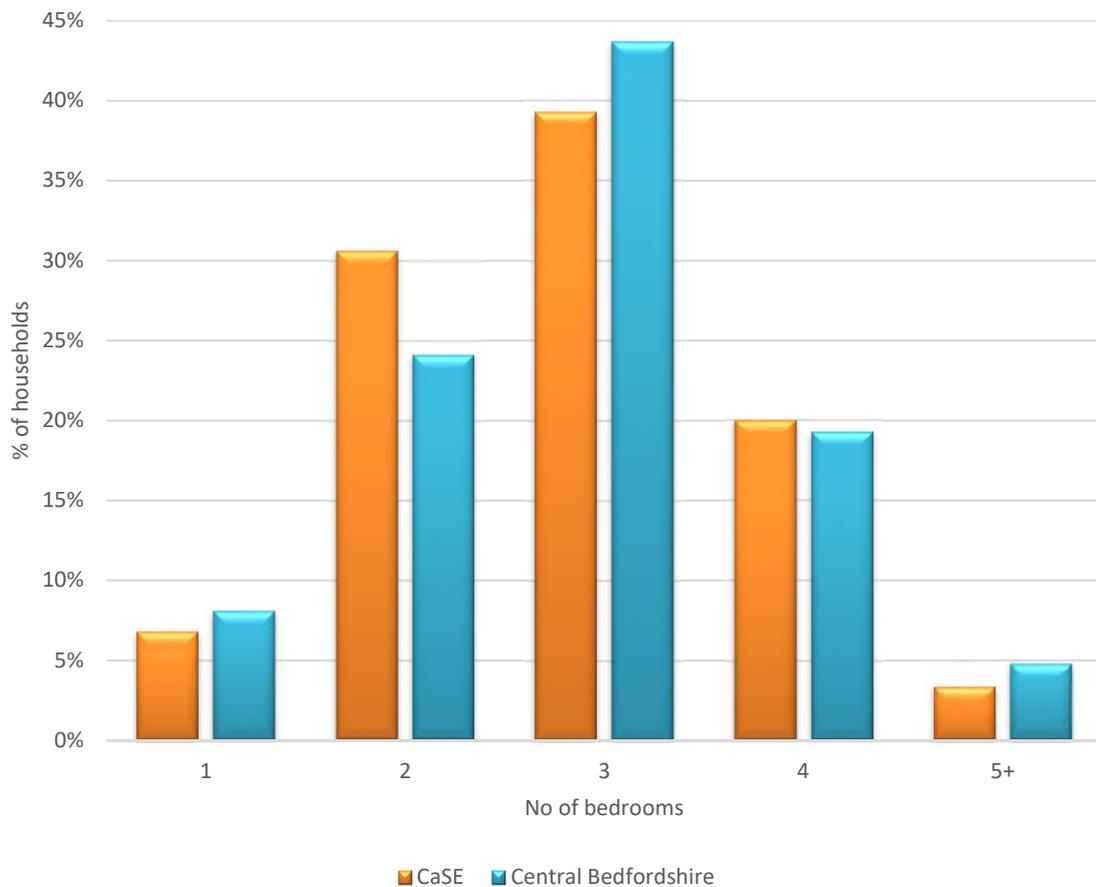
Source: 2011 Census

12.17 This is reinforced to a certain degree when looking at the number of bedrooms that properties in Caddington and Slip End have. Figure A9 shows that it has a very high proportion of 2-bed properties compared to Central Bedfordshire. However, the proportion of 3-bed properties – the most common type of semi-detached property – is below that of Central Bedfordshire. This points to a stock of smaller semi-detached properties which may explain the declining number of families in the neighbourhood area because they are unable to access larger properties they need as their family unit grows in size.

12.18 What is interesting from Figure A9 is that there are a low proportion of the smallest dwellings, i.e. 1-bed dwellings. Given the number of older people living alone, this highlights that many are living in larger properties – possibly even the 3-4 bed ‘family’ home – which in time they will need to move out from but could find it difficult to stay in the local community in a property suited to their needs.



**Figure A9: Number of bedrooms**



Source: 2011 Census

12.19 The ownership profile of these dwellings (Figure A10) shows that 83% of people own their property which is well above the Central Bedfordshire average of 73%. Of this, the large majority – well above average – are owned outright. This reinforces the high level of retirees in the Caddington and Slip End Neighbourhood Plan area.

12.20 The proportion of properties that are social rented properties<sup>7</sup> is well below the Central Bedfordshire average, at just 8%. Equally the private rented sector is proportionately under-represented.

<sup>7</sup> Housing owned by local authorities and private registered providers for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime



**Figure A10: Ownership profile**



Source: 2011 Census

