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# Castor & Ailsworth

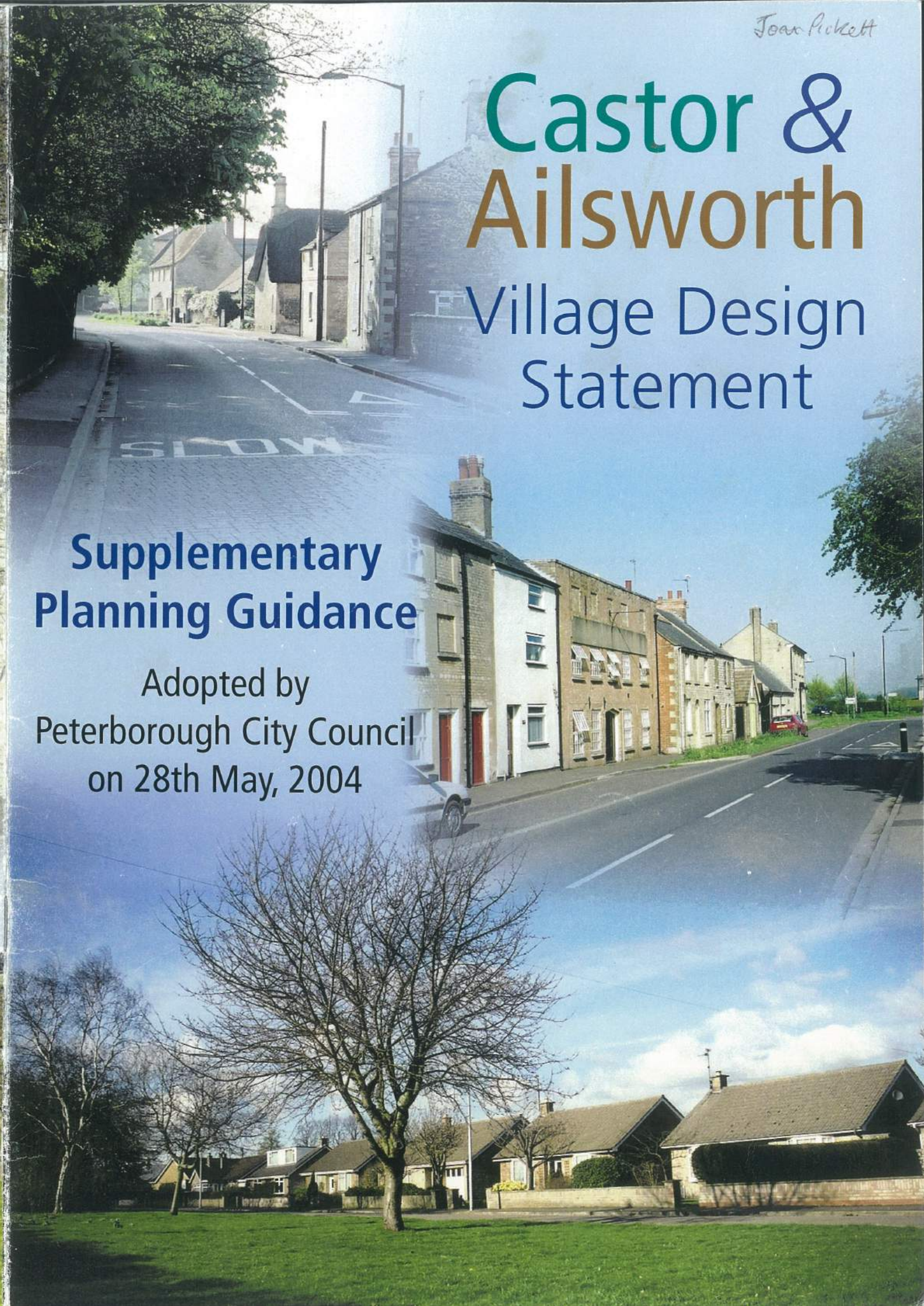
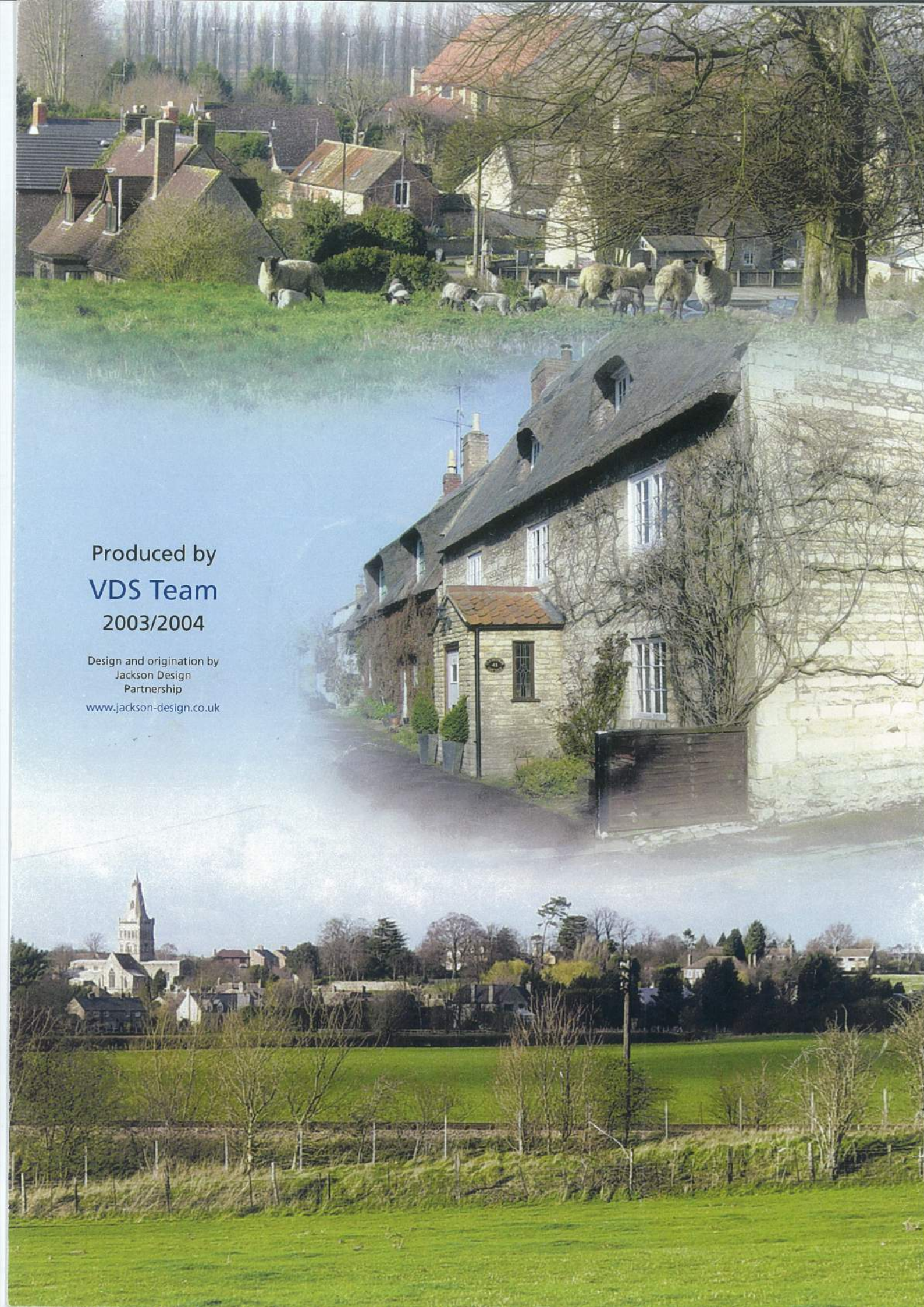
## Village Design Statement

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### Supplementary Planning Guidance

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## 1 Introduction

This Village Design Statement covers the adjacent villages of Castor and Ailsworth. Whilst retaining their own individuality and Parish Councils, the villages have over recent years grown together such that a passer-by might miss the boundary between them.

The draft of this document was being written at a time when a large number of local residents were involved in creating an archive of historical documents relating to the parish and contributing towards a book on its history. Many others had carried out an extensive village audit, a comprehensive and methodical survey which covered many aspects of the built environment. The aim of the audit is to create a 'snapshot' of the villages as they are today. This present document is based on the picture which emerged.

**The Peterborough Local Plan, or its successor document,** requires that any future development should be 'in keeping with the character of the area'. This Village Design Statement therefore attempts to define those features of the built and natural environment which give Castor and Ailsworth their particular character and highlight those qualities valued by the residents. It should be emphasised that it is the Local Plan which will determine whether or not development should take place; a Village Design Statement cannot express the residents' views on such issues.

The role of a Village Design Statement is also to raise awareness of the impact that any changes may make to the villages. Even small changes which do not require planning permission (such as altering a front garden fence or removing a tree) have the potential to alter the look and feel of the place.

In addition to defining the character of the villages and raising awareness, the Village Design Statement provides guidelines on design issues so that future developments, whether these are the provision of more housing, or simply alterations or additions to existing properties, are in harmony with their setting.

**On adoption as Supplementary Planning Guidance by the Peterborough City Council, the recommendations of this Village Design Statement will be taken into account when decisions on planning applications are made.**

**The Village Design Statement therefore gives residents an opportunity to share their views on the design of future development.**

(See note 1 at end of document for regulations)

## 2 Evolution of the Villages

Castor and Ailsworth grew up on the first area of high ground to the west of the fens, the Middle Jurassic Limestone escarpment, whose stone is visible in the vernacular architecture. Archaeological evidence indicates that in c250AD, a Praetorium, probably the palace of the Roman Governor of East Anglia, was built on the hill in Castor, replacing an earlier villa, and commanding views over the Roman market town of Durobrivae and a large industrial area producing distinctive fine pottery (Castor Ware). Roman stonework can still be seen at the bases of walls in Church Hill and Stocks Hill and the Roman baths and other buildings lie under the school sports field. In 650AD, St Kyneburgha founded a Saxon convent on the site of the Roman palace. The present Church of St Kyneburgha is largely Norman, the tower being completed in 1120 and the whole church re-dedicated in 1124.

In 1340, Castor was granted a charter for a fair and a market, but both villages were primarily agricultural communities, with the residents employed locally.

The arrival of the railway in 1845 and the building of a station in Ailsworth (named Castor Station) brought some changes to the local economy, but the line was closed as part of the national network in 1966. The line has subsequently been developed privately as part of a working railway museum.

As farming methods changed and transport and communications improved, so the function and shape of the villages changed. Many of the more substantial agricultural buildings have now been converted to residential use. The latter half of the twentieth century saw a rapid expansion of the villages; houses were built on the many small fields and plots between the older properties, then in larger groups between the villages and to the north of Castor Church.

Over the years, the public buildings have also evolved and the present ones are well used by the residents. Apart from the church with its Cedar Centre, there are the Ailsworth Methodist Chapel and School Room, the Village Hall, two public houses, a restaurant, a general store, a butchers shop and a Post Office (currently closed, but efforts are being made to re-open it).

## 3 Setting and Structure

The villages are surrounded by agricultural land, situated in an Area of Best Landscape. To the north, the countryside is characterised by areas of ancient woodland and isolated trees, a legacy of its past use for both grazing and hunting. Even today, amongst the more intensively-farmed fields lie a number of remnant meadows, designated as County Wildlife Sites for the variety of species they contain. A larger area of mixed heath and woodland, Castor Hanglands contains an area which is designated as a National Nature Reserve and is a popular recreation area. Immediately to the south of the villages, the River Nene and its backwaters provide an important wildlife corridor and large areas have been designated as Site of Special Scientific Interest or as County Wildlife Sites. Like the Hanglands, this area is also a popular recreation area. A

large number of well-used footpaths and bridleways give access to the surrounding countryside.

Castor extends from the Ferry Bridge area in the East, westwards along the line of the old Peterborough to Leicester Road, until it meets Ailsworth. Historically, development to the south was limited by the flood-prone water meadows of the River Nene and even today, there are few houses on the south side of Peterborough Road which do not have direct access to it. Castor is dominated by its beautiful and historically important Norman church, which stands prominently on the hill, and the old village grew up both along the high road and around the church and village green just to the west. The village has quite an open aspect, due in part to the presence of some fine old houses set in substantial grounds containing mature trees. A remnant meadow beside Village Farm, the school playing field with its views of the church and the Glebe Field to the east of the church, along with the grassy roadside verges contribute to the open feeling.

In contrast to Castor's roughly west-east lineation, the old village of Ailsworth developed principally along a roughly north-south axis, with Main Street and the parallel Helpston and Maffit Roads running up the gentle slope northwards away from the River Nene. The southern end of Ailsworth has open green spaces, with a green in front of the old Wheatsheaf Public House (now a private residence) on Peterborough Road, green verges extending half way up Main Street and another green area in front of the bungalows on Singerfire Road.

In 1992 a new section of the A47 trunk road was built, bypassing the two villages to the north and relieving the village streets of the increasingly heavy through traffic.

In 1969, much of Castor and Ailsworth was designated as conservation areas, with only the more recent housing developments being excluded.

The City of Peterborough lies approximately 8 kilometres (5 miles) to the east of Castor, but the steep road out of the village up Love's Hill creates a feeling of separation, emphasised by the attractive open parkland character of the intervening area.

Many of the design features of the villages reflect this setting. They draw from the underlying geology and agricultural activity. To ensure the full appreciation of the design elements that make up the villages, it is important that their rural setting is retained.

## 4 Village Envelopes

The Village Envelopes are defined in the Local Plan and are an important part of controlling development. They largely follow the built up area of the village though it should be noted that the village envelopes do not follow the Parish boundaries. Their construction helps to protect two of the important meadows in Castor. Outside the current village envelopes the countryside is the dominant environment which provides the setting for the villages.



## 5 Main Zones, spaces and building groups

Each village contains certain zones, each of which have particular and unique characteristics. These were clearly identified in the Built Environment Audit Projects and can be seen on map Fig 1. The most significant zones are described below:

### 5.1 The area around the Church

This is the most defining element of the villages, an open space, yet the centre and focus of the villages both geographically and functionally. It is bordered by the Church, school, pub and village hall along with other stone buildings on the south of Peterborough Road with large trees forming the edge to the Cedars. The stone walls around the space are important in tying it together. The disused barns, known as Darby's Barns, (adjacent to the Village Hall) are obvious candidates for renovation and conversion. Any alterations will need to be carefully carried out as the Village Hall and one of the barns are listed buildings. Their location, style, form and materials should be generally retained as they are an important part of this key area. The space is dominated by the Church on its elevated site and accentuated by the tight entrances along Peterborough Road and from the lanes to the north. From within the space the all-important rural setting of the village is also clearly evident with views of the countryside to the east and south.

### 5.2 Love's Hill

The "down hill" approach to Castor is an important defining element, creating a strong sense of arrival emphasised by the long, high stone wall on the northern side. Castor House, at the foot of the hill, with its well defined formal space in front, contrasts with the traditional farm buildings that are close to the road and instantly gives the impression of a stone-built village of quality and character.

### 5.3 Peterborough Road

The road through the two villages is a series of constrictions and spaces of differing qualities, shapes and sizes, which create a rhythm unique to Castor and Ailsworth. This combination of spaces, closely contained views and some larger vistas creates the character of this part of the villages. Coherence is provided by stone buildings and boundary walls, though individually these have few points of conformity and much variation.

Starting at the foot of Love's Hill, Peterborough Road moves through three narrow views up Water Lane, Splash Lane, and Stocks Hill. The aspect narrows before opening up to the school playing field and views to the Church. The trees and shrubs at the front of The Cedars contain the road prior to a smaller scale space in front of the Fitzwilliam Arms, a thatched stone building (currently Fratelli's Restaurant) which is one of the signature points of Castor. Beyond the Fitzwilliam Arms, on the north side of Peterborough Road, large houses with large front gardens create a quite grand scale. Particularly in contrast to the south side, which at this point is characterised by smaller cottages and houses that often immediately abut the road. The Prince of Wales Feathers creates another 'pinch point' before spaces are opened up on the south side with larger houses and front gardens.

Meadows create a gap between the two village envelopes (not parish boundaries) bringing the countryside into the villages, emphasising this all-important setting. The aspect closes again with Carlton Court to the South and Thorolds Way running northwards into a housing development constructed in the 1950's.

Crossing into Ailsworth the quality of space is lost due to the gap created by the demolition of the Petrol filling station. New buildings are needed in this gap to knit the street scene together and create a stronger edge to the green open space between Peterborough Road and Singerfire Road. This is followed by the two village shops and a final row of old cottages, interspersed with some larger scale tall buildings. These buildings are a wide mix but definition comes from the two largest buildings, whose scale is justified by their original purpose as public houses and which emphasise that Peterborough Road was, and still is, the main thoroughfare through the village.

There is then a view up Main Street with its contrasting wide verges, before a clean break into the countryside, accentuated by the recently built corner terrace at the entrance to Station Road.

Along the whole length of Peterborough Road the stone walls are a noticeable feature, although varying in style and height. They are not continuous but are predominant, and where they are lacking, the quality of enclosure and identity of space deteriorates.

### 5.4 Castor Village Green

The village green is well enclosed giving it a clear identity, again characterised by stone walls and buildings, including the old tithe barn wall along one side of The Green itself. The various roads and lanes radiating from it provide generally narrow winding entrances emphasising its centrality to the old village. It does not have a strong architectural identity and demonstrates that the village has grown organically and gradually over the centuries. It now has little function as the centre of the village apart from the pub, which is on the edge of the area.

### 5.5 Church Hill and High Street

Rising from The Green in an easterly direction, Church Hill winds its way to the top of Stocks Hill. The first section contains both old and new properties, some of brick and some of stone construction. The second section forms the northern boundary of the Church, with Vine House, a former Rectory and property of historic interest opposite.

High Street, which follows the crossing of Stocks Hill, has some of the oldest properties in Castor. A number of these are of stone construction with thatched roofs. The road takes a sharp bend at the entrance to Samworths Close after which a number of modern detached houses have been constructed on the south side. This section, which leads to Water Lane, is unmade and generally not suitable for motor vehicles. The village envelope crosses High Street immediately after the last house, leaving a pleasant rural area much appreciated by residents.

### 5.6 Main Street, Ailsworth.

This street is very different from the other parts of the villages. It is characterised by its almost continuous wide grass verges, the road narrowing at its northern end. The stone walls and buildings are again an important part of its feeling and so are its very gentle incline and its relative straightness, slightly imprecise, giving a long view of the street. All routes out of it are at right angles. The street importantly reads as a single space, though with smaller ones within it. Individual buildings vary greatly demonstrating again the organic way that the village has developed over time, including during the past few decades. No individual building dominates. The open space beside the cross street to Helpston Road provides an important connection to the surrounding fields

### 5.7 Helpston Road

Helpston Road is the entrance to the village from the north and Castor Hanglands. It lacks a strong character but the few older properties at both ends are important in establishing a stone village feel.

### 5.8 Maffit Road

Maffit Road is a narrow road, with a character of its own. It has a very wide range of houses, mainly relatively recently built, interspersed with trees and hedges and the occasional stone wall immediately adjoining the road. In places, there are important gaps, revealing the open countryside and emphasising the rural character of the village. The strongest statement within the road is the Old Malthouse that, along with the cottage on the East Side, creates a central pinchpoint and individual identity to the road. The village feel is further emphasised by the stables and farm buildings at the northern end that signal the agricultural land beyond.

### 5.9 Other Distinct areas

There are several other well defined and distinct areas within the villages with particular characteristics of their own. They are not in the tradition of "old village", e.g. stone developments, but each has been an important element in the development over time of Castor and Ailsworth as a working and growing village. The various parts all connect back into the village and support the village facilities. Together they provide a range of styles and homes that give a balanced diversity to the village. With the exception of Singerfire Road they are visually separated from the main stone-dominated parts of the village. Although they outnumber the stone buildings they do not detract from the perception that the villages are predominantly stone.

Every one of the following areas was designed as a whole. Each has its own character, usually with a single or very limited range of materials and architectural features. The integrity of the original design is important. All have the benefit of no through traffic, giving peaceful, residential environments. **These areas include;**

**Peterborough Road, Ferry Bridge to Mill Lane:** an area of very large houses on large plots, all located on the South side of the road. With the exception of Hill House, the properties are of brick construction. Set well back, the houses are screened by trees, some with security fences.

**Samworths Close:** a clearly contained and well proportioned space of largish properties with open front gardens that epitomises 1960s development.

**Silvester Road:** neatly organised semi detached bungalows and houses with open front gardens and a gentle slope.

**St Kyneburghas Close:** small late 20th century terraced houses tightly enclosed with strong hedges and front landscaping.

**Holme Close:** a 1970s spacious street of detached houses and chalets with wide and open front gardens. The sense of space is emphasised by the discreet entrances both by road and the two footpaths.

**Thorolds Way and Benhams Close,** a spaciouly laid out, Council-built estate mainly of semi detached houses and bungalows, now privately owned. The area is given additional character by the gentle curves of the building lines.

**Andrew Close, Casworth Way and Singerfire Road,** an estate of bungalows of a uniform overall design, but with just enough variety to create interest. Low walls enclose the front gardens and define the street scene.

**Small Areas.** There are a number of other small areas within the villages that have not been mentioned. These generally have their own character, but do not impact significantly on the village as a whole.



## 6 Building Materials

### 6.1 Walls

The old core of both villages, clustered mainly along the through routes, is built of local limestone giving the initial impression that the villages are predominantly built from stone. However, it can be seen from the *Built Environment Audit* that in both villages stone buildings only account for about a quarter of the total. Nonetheless, because of the prominence of stone buildings on the main roads, these tend to define the character of the villages.

A small number of buildings have walls of old bricks or are rendered. Since about 1975, a number of new houses in the vicinity of older properties have been built in new, reclaimed or artificial stone. About two-thirds of the buildings, these mostly post-dating 1950, are built from modern facing bricks. The modern brick colours vary but are generally buff or light grey. Some older brick houses were built in red or yellow/cream bricks. Most of the modern brick buildings are to be found away from the main through routes grouped in small developments, on individual plots or infill sites. There are a few houses in both villages that are built in brick with stone quoins and door and window surrounds, or vice versa (stone with brick door and window surrounds).



*Modern design (above) can blend with older properties (right)*



### 6.2 Roofing

The older properties in the villages are mostly roofed in a variety of traditional materials including Collyweston slates, clay pantiles,

Welsh slates, and thatch. Some replica slates (both Collyweston and Welsh) and pantiles have also been used. However, about 75% of roofing is in modern tiles, reflecting the extent of modern development.

### 6.3 Windows and external doors

Windows and external doors generally do not follow any defined pattern. They can be found in virtually every possible material including softwood, hardwood, steel, aluminium, and uPVC.

### 6.4 Rainwater goods

Gutters and downpipes can also be found in a multitude of materials including cast iron, aluminium, and uPVC.

## 7 Listed Buildings

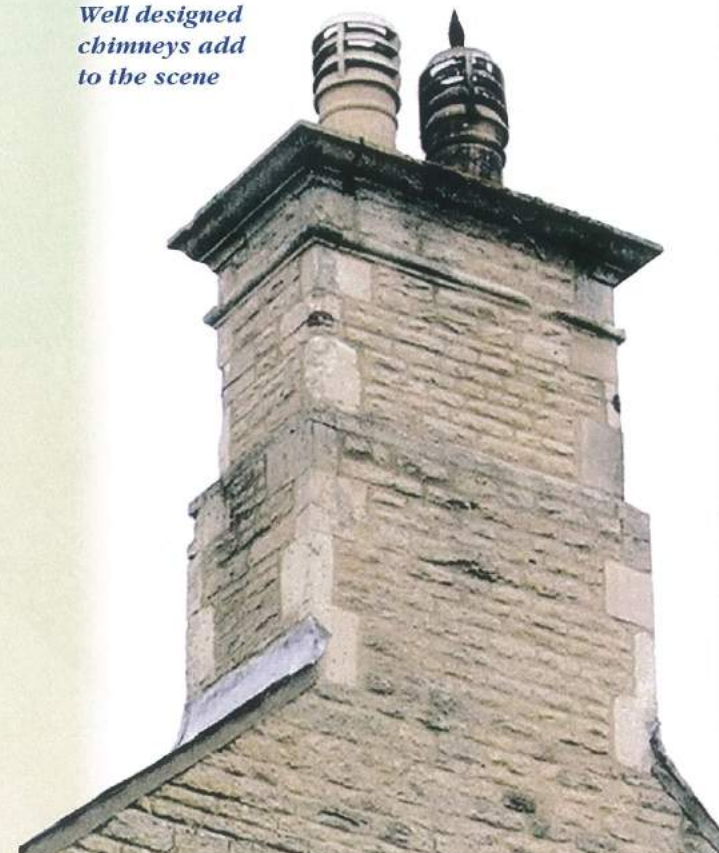
In total, 68 buildings and 21 associated structures in the two villages have listed status, the earliest domestic buildings dating from the fifteenth and sixteenth century. They are reasonably well spread out, although there are concentrations along Peterborough Road, around the Church, Village Green and High Street in Castor and along Main Street in Ailsworth. Some of the larger houses are well screened from the road, but others such as the Church, Castor House and The Fitzwilliam Arms exhibit their own strong identity that helps make Castor and Ailsworth a remembered place. The listed buildings in general set the character of the villages; they are almost exclusively stone built, and most are prominent, whether they are large houses set in gardens or small cottages which abut the road.

## 8 Architectural Features

Architectural features can enhance a building provided they are in keeping with the building style and the general environment. In villages such as ours, elaborate features, which may sit well in certain urban areas, would be out of character with our rural setting.

Some buildings may not warrant any specific architectural features, whilst others may benefit from quoins and/or door and window surrounds of a different material from the general construction, or the introduction of a contrasting panel of wall in say render or timber weather boarding. The combination of brick and stone occurs repeatedly throughout the villages and can be used to good effect. A variety of such details would be welcome and should be encouraged where appropriate.

*Well designed chimneys add to the scene*



*Quoins can be an attractive feature*

Rooflines have an interesting variety of chimneys and dormer window styles, complementing the character of the village scene. Stone capped gables are found on several houses and a number of properties have beautifully built chimneys in ashlar, stone or brick.

When considering architectural features, the character of the zone selected for development must be taken into account.



Fig 1 Zones



Ailsworth

Castor



## 9 Boundaries

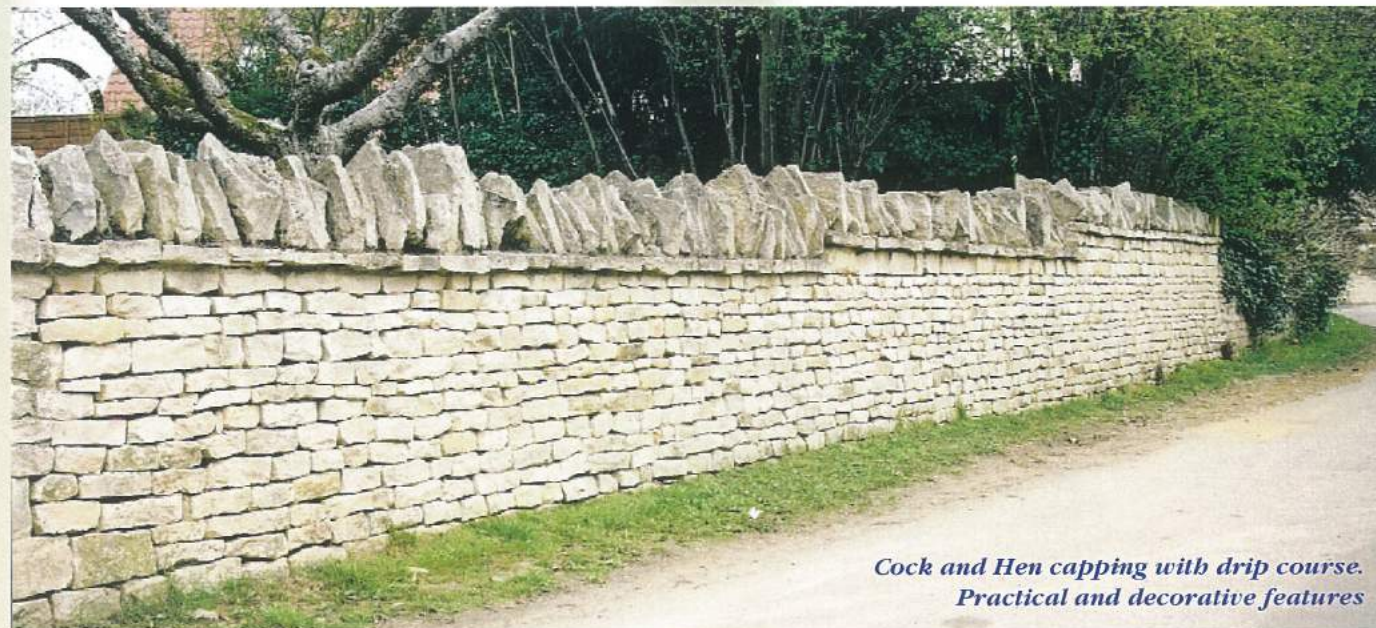
The impression that Castor and Ailsworth are stone-built villages is enhanced by the many stone boundary walls.

Most of the houses of historical importance have high stone walls and particularly striking examples can be seen on the north side of Peterborough Road, Stocks Hill and Church Hill in Castor and the North end of Main Street and Helpston Road in Ailsworth.

Other stone walls in the villages were originally agricultural buildings and enclosures; for example the high wall on the west side of The Green in Castor, where blocked-in doorways can be seen in what remains of the old tithe barn. Stone boundary walls are not confined to older properties as a significant number of newer houses have been built within old agricultural enclosures. These walls tend to be of a lower construction than those built around the larger old houses.

A variety of coping styles is evident in the village, including 'Cock and hen', shaped (half round), capped with stone or slate, tiled with pantiles, or cemented. The 'cock and hen' and half round copings predominate.

The more recent developments have a variety of boundaries including low walls of stone or brick, hedges or fences, while some are open to the road.



*Cock and Hen capping with drip course.  
Practical and decorative features*

## 10 Other Features

### 10.1 Footpaths

There is a substantial network of footpaths and bridleways in and surrounding the villages, which allow access to the countryside. The Nene Way and Hereward Way recreational paths here follow the north bank of the River Nene, and link the village footpaths with Ferry Meadows Country Park. As well as providing an amenity enjoyed by residents and visitors alike, the footpaths are significant in that they provide alternative viewpoints. This means that any space or building may be seen from many angles; fronts can become sides or rear views and even roof top views.

### 10.2 Trees and grass verges

The grass verges enhance the green and open aspect of many parts of the villages. In recent years, residents have planted more than 20,000 daffodil bulbs on the verges of Love's Hill, and Peterborough Road, as well as on the two village greens. This spring show of bulbs is very attractive and adds greatly to the character of the village.

There are many fine trees in gardens and in the wild, some important examples being the old oak tree in the Glebe Field east of Stocks Hill, the various firs and cedars on the west side of the school field and churchyard, the old stand of poplar trees to the North end of Main Street, Ailsworth and pollard white willows in Castor Village Meadows.

### 10.3 Internal Open Views

The rural views within the villages are much appreciated by residents and contribute to the general atmosphere. The more significant of these were identified in the Townscape Evaluation exercise, conducted as part of the Built Environment Audit. (See note 2 at end of document).

The meadows in Castor, separating the two village envelopes are perhaps the most open of the outward views and are of particular value. The meadow to the south of Peterborough Road is the site of a mediaeval manor house and is a scheduled monument. (See note 2 at end of document). To the north, the view is equally impressive, a swathe of open land enhancing the position of Village Farmhouse on its eastern boundary.

## 11 Summary

The two villages have evolved over several hundred years by a process of natural growth, which has produced the unique character we enjoy today.

Over the years, a new house or extension has been built here and there and, in a few cases, a group of houses. The groupings have always been restricted to a short street or cul-de-sac. To some extent the pattern of growth can be seen by reference to the zoning described elsewhere. As natural growth has occurred a random effect has been created, particularly in the older parts of the villages, with different sizes of houses juxtaposed in varying positions to each other. Consequently, many of the roofscapes also produce a pleasing random appearance when viewed from an elevated position, within or adjacent to the villages.

In addition to the houses, a number of essential public buildings have evolved and are well used by the inhabitants. These include a Church (with the Cedar Centre), a Chapel (with a School Room), the Village Hall, two pubs, a restaurant, a general store, a butchers shop and a post office (currently closed, but with some efforts being made to re-open it).

As the buildings have evolved, so too have many boundary walls, footpaths and various open spaces within and around the villages, all of which contribute greatly to the overall character.

It is a combination of all these factors that attracts the inhabitants to live in the villages (some for many years), and generates a healthy community spirit. This has resulted in the formation of a great many flourishing groups and organisations representing the diverse interests of the inhabitants. These all help to foster the excellent community spirit. The village millennium web site: [www.castorailsworth.co.uk](http://www.castorailsworth.co.uk) is testimony to the spirit that exists.

### 10.4 Important Views out of the Villages

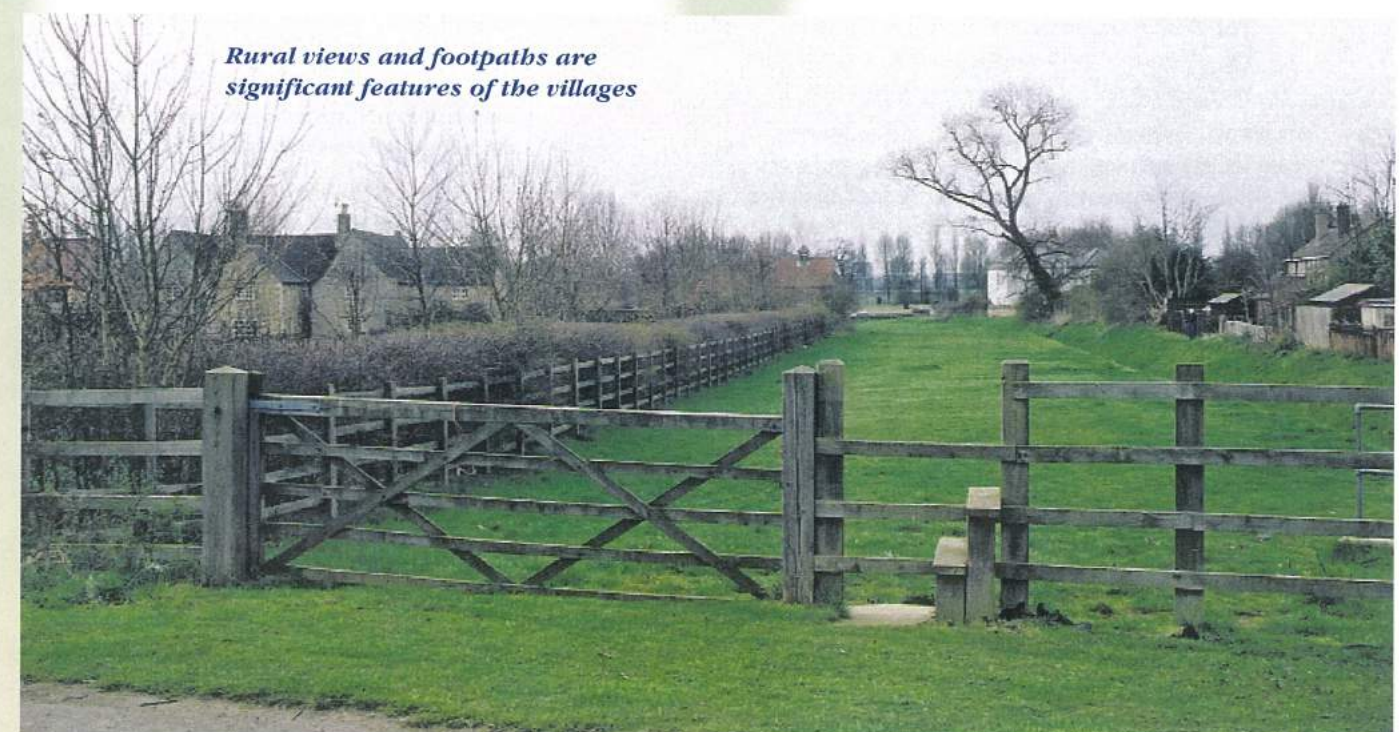
There are a number of open spaces within the villages which provide opportunities to admire the views and open countryside. Fig 2.

The most popular are:

- 1 From St Kynaburgha Church looking south towards Alwalton.
- 2 From the field West of Water Lane looking South across Castor provides a good view of various types of rooftops.
- 3 From the junction of Mill Lane and Loves Hill, looking west affords a good view of the Nene Valley. Further down Mill Lane looking east is a pleasant view of Ferry Meadows.
- 4 From the bridleway at the end of Maffit Road/ Main Street in Ailsworth looking north towards Castor Hanglands and south west to the Nene Valley.
- 5 From the Nene Valley Way/River Walk towards the villages gives splendid views to the Church and the village.
- 6 Views to the north of Castor from Clay, Lane, Cow Lane and High Street, across farmland as yet archaeologically unexplored, are a significant part of our heritage.

### 10.5 Access.

Many of the access roads to and from the main roads throughout the villages have significant 'blind spots' and some traffic calming measures have been put in place along Peterborough Road. Water Lane, Splash Lane, Port Lane and The Green (leading to Clay Lane), junctions at Stocks Hill/ Church Hill and High Street/Samworths Close in Castor, the link road between Helpston Road and Main Street and the southern end of Maffit Road are particular examples of potential hazard. In addition, these roads all have narrow sections that inhibit the free flow of traffic.



*Rural views and footpaths are  
significant features of the villages*



## 12 Guidelines

### 12.1 Main Points

The guidelines have been prepared with the following points in mind.

- 12.1.1 Listed buildings have their own particular requirements and the guidelines concentrate on those which do not come into these categories. It is expected that the contents will however, be considered when alterations to listed buildings are being prepared and examined.
- 12.1.2 The Built Environment Audit, (see note 2), carried out by residents provided much of the information for the preparation of the design statement and should be used in conjunction with the guidelines where clarification is required.
- 12.1.3 The villages have distinct zones and it is important that the guidelines are used in accordance with the character of the zone in question.

### 12.2 Specific Guidelines

- 12.2.1 Any future developments of more than one or two houses should be restricted to small groups to reflect the style of the adjacent buildings or zones. Layouts should be as random as possible and include a variety of building forms and arrangements to reflect the mixture of styles within the villages.
- 12.2.2 New buildings should respect the surrounding development, in terms of height, size, shape and roof pitch. No new buildings should exceed three stories in any circumstances, and in general, two stories should be the maximum. The Built Environment Audit shows materials in each zone. (See note 2 at end of document).
- 12.2.3 The design of any new building, extension or alteration to an existing building must always be sympathetic to its neighbours and in keeping with the village character.  
  
The design should take into consideration not only the obvious view from the road, but also other views afforded by surrounding footpaths.  
  
This guideline also applies to conservatories, which although not always requiring planning permission, may have a strong visual impact on their surroundings.
- 12.2.4 In order to maintain the village character, stone (or artificial stone) should be encouraged, particularly in the conservation areas. In other areas building materials should be chosen to blend with surrounding properties. Wall materials should be within the range found in the particular zone.
- 12.2.5 Architectural features should be in keeping with the scale and style of the property and reflect good building practice. A variety of local vernacular details would be welcome and should be encouraged where appropriate. (See section 8).
- 12.2.6 Roof materials should be within the type and colour range of those existing in the village. In the Conservation Areas, particular care should be taken

to ensure consistency both in materials and details such as size and grading of tiles and the treatment of ridges and rainwater goods. Where there is consistency in a given zone this must be respected.

- 12.2.7 Windows and external doors in new buildings should be consistent with the style of the property and should respect surrounding properties where appropriate. Replacement windows should replicate the style of original windows and be set back to the same degree as the originals. Modern materials, finishes and mechanisms may be used providing the design is appropriate to the building in question.
- 12.2.8 Dormer windows are a feature of the village and are acceptable provided the design is suitable to the property. Flat roof dormers should be avoided.
- 12.2.9 Existing stone boundary walls should be retained. Extension of existing walls and the building of new boundary walls should also be encouraged. These should be of stone or brick with local capping details and a drip course. The materials chosen should be sympathetic to the local environment and should reflect the materials of the building or adjacent walls, as appropriate. The type of pointing used for the stone walls is also important and should follow local styles.  
  
Heights and styles of boundary walls should reflect the existing walls.  
  
High, close-boarded fencing is generally inappropriate as a frontage for domestic boundaries.
- 12.2.10 It is important that the footpaths and bridleways are retained. Any future developments should try to retain the line of existing footpaths and these should be left as 'green corridors'. If diversions are necessary, they should provide a pleasant walking environment. Any opportunities for new footpaths should be encouraged.
- 12.2.11 Existing green spaces should be retained and the inclusion of green areas within new developments are very much encouraged.
- 12.2.12 Any new development should be designed to minimise the visual and road safety impact of parked cars. Developers of new dwellings are encouraged to provide adequate on-site parking, consistent with Local Plan policy.
- 12.2.13 Significant views into and out of the villages, as shown in Fig 2, should not be adversely affected by new development.
- 12.2.14 Modern architecture that complements existing buildings is welcome.
- 12.2.15 Roads should reflect the rural nature of the village and if kerbs are necessary, these should be as discrete as possible.
- 12.2.16 Native trees and hedges should be planted in new developments wherever practicable.

## 13 Residents' Key Priorities

It is recognised that these are outside the remit for the VDS and are excluded from the terms for consideration as Supplementary Planning. Guidance. They are however, included because they greatly concern the residents of Castor and Ailsworth.

- 12.2.17 It is important that there is a diverse range of housing in the village to ensure a well balanced community. It is therefore important that new development encompasses a mix of house types and sizes and that consideration is given to affordable properties wherever possible.
- 12.2.18 Large detached new properties require special care to fit into the village character. The use of flamboyant gates, railings and paved forecourts should be discouraged.
- 12.2.19 The villages lie in an area important for its archaeology. The whereabouts of some remains are known, however, most areas in and around the current built village, have the potential to harbour further valuable archaeological remains. In such cases, archaeological evaluation should precede the determination of development proposals.
- 12.2.20 There is a strong presumption against the development of sites protected as scheduled monuments. (See note 3 at end of document).
- 12.2.21 Development should not result in the sub-division of a large garden if that garden and its house make a positive contribution to the village character.
- 12.2.22 While improvements to street furniture are welcome, replacements and additions should always recognise the village scene. Items that suit city centres and suburbs are often inappropriate in a village setting. As these have significant impact, great care must be exercised in ensuring they blend with their surroundings.

- 1 The Built Audit confirms that existing properties are constructed from a variety of materials and in a variety of styles. It is this diversity that gives Castor and Ailsworth their character. Although there is not one particular 'Castor and Ailsworth Style', they are nonetheless village in character. It is essential that any new development acknowledges this and avoids designs which are more appropriate to towns and cities.
- 2 The community spirit in our villages has a reputation of being second to none. This has been nurtured and supported by gradual development and steady increases in population. Future development must follow this trend if we are to retain the characteristics we value and are desired by people who wish to join our community.
- 3 Open spaces, views and footpaths are an essential part of our villages and their retention is very important to us. The open land immediately surrounding the villages is a valued amenity and their erosion to any significant extent is unacceptable.
- 4 There are known archaeological remains buried in and around the villages boundaries and potentially, more remain undiscovered in the areas on the outskirts. Great care must be taken to preserve the known sites and careful exploration is essential before any development takes place on potential locations.
- 5 The village is highly dependent upon the use of the car to provide freedom of movement so that individuals can travel to work, shops, health, education and leisure facilities etc. However the car also has a large impact upon the visual and safety qualities of the village and it is important that design encourages cars to be parked off the public highway and ensures the highest possible safety throughout the villages
- 6 Road Safety is a major concern in the village and a number of junctions have been identified as potential hazards. (See 10.5). It is important that, when any planning applications are being considered, these junctions are surveyed at varying times of the day and evening in order that the full impact of the development on them can be properly assessed.



## 14 Notes

1 The Design Statement has been written to take into account the **Peterborough Local Plan (adopted 1996)** and relates to the following policies.

BE2 Design of new development

BE3 Building material in new development

BE6 Design of extensions and alterations  
BE14 Developments affecting nearby residential properties

BE15 Residential development which would be detrimental to the character of the surrounding area.

BE22 Character and appearance of development in conservation areas.

BE25 Protected sites and frontages in villages

BE34 Retention of historic fabrics in repairs to historic buildings

BE38 Extensions to listed buildings and other important buildings

L7 Layout and design of development in or adjoining the countryside.

A review of the Local Plan is currently underway and relevant policies for the replacement Peterborough Local Plan will be taken into account.

### 2 Castor and Ailsworth Built Environment Audits.

These documents are based upon detailed surveys carried out by residents. They include details of the buildings within the villages, particularly, age, size, wall and roof materials and listed status. The reports including the details shown on the maps are good sources of information for anyone considering developments within Castor and Ailsworth. Castor and Ailsworth Parish Councils and Peterborough City Planners have copies for viewing

### 3 Scheduled Monuments.

Scheduled monuments are archaeological remains that are named on a national list and given special protection under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, because of their national importance. Scheduled Monument designation can cover buried remains and deposits, earthwork sites, structures and buildings.

Most activities that are potentially damaging to Scheduled Monuments (such as development construction, tree planting, metal detecting, excavation) will be illegal and liable for prosecution unless specific consent has been obtained from the Department of Culture Media and Sport.

In practice, English Heritage administers and advises applications for works to Scheduled Monuments. English Heritage's regional or national office can provide advice for consent and the consent process for specific cases.

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## Fig 2 Main Views and Rights of Way

