



# Ickwell Conservation Area

## Introduction

18 May 2005

A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. This document is one of a series of revised conservation area appraisals in Mid Bedfordshire. Ickwell Conservation Area was designated on 6th October 1971 and no review has been undertaken since. The setting, character and appearance of Ickwell are considered separately. This will enable Development Control to determine whether proposals preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area or its setting. Areas in need of enhancement are also identified.



# Setting

The village of Ickwell lies on gently undulating land and is surrounded by agricultural land with the registered Historic Parks and Gardens of Old Warden Park and Southill Park (both grade II\*) to the south and Moggerhanger Park (grade II) to the north. Ickwell Conservation Area includes the houses facing the large village green together with Ickwell Bury which is set within its own registered parkland setting (grade II). The area also includes a spur of houses running west along Warden Road and a shorter leg running south along the bridleway towards the aerodrome to the east of Shuttleworth House and which serves the Shuttleworth Collection.

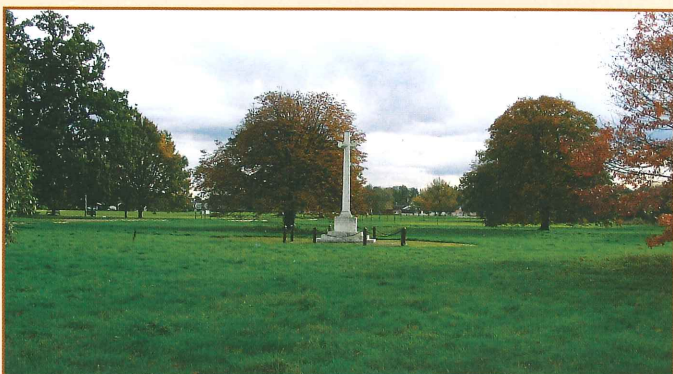


*Warden Road*

The entrance to the village along Warden Road (from the south west) is through attractive countryside and parkland. The land to the north and west of the road comprises the parkland of Ickwell Bury and the road is flanked by belts of mature trees.

From the north, although the parkland of Ickwell Bury dominates the west side of the road, ribbon housing development on the west side means that the settlements of Ickwell and Northill virtually join. Along the footpath from the south east, the setting of the village is dominated by paddocks. The only other route into the village is from Caldecote to the east where a short ribbon of residential development, either side of the road, announces the village before the historic core is reached.

## Character



*Ickwell Green*

Ickwell is dominated by the large village green and by the presence of Ickwell Bury to the west. In the C13, Ickwell Bury Manor was attached to the Barony of Eaton and by the C17 covered almost 500 acres. The C17 house burnt down in 1937 and was soon rebuilt. It is the new house together with earlier outbuildings that are seen when viewed across the impressive landscaped park which contributes much to the village character.

The Home Farm of Ickwell Bury survives on the north side of The Green together with a very attractive range of estate cottages plus the old village bakery on the west side. A separate farm occupied the south side; the farmhouse surviving, whilst on the east side is The Old House which is of medieval origins and is still partly surrounded by a moat. Several timber framed cottages with either thatched or clay tiled roofs survive around The Green and on Warden Road whilst the former village smithy is now a changing room on The Green.



The right to hold a fair on The Green has existed since 1676 and the permanent maypole on the west side of The Green is a reminder that there have been May Day celebrations here for over 400 years and continue to present day. During the

Summer, the larger area of The Green is used for cricket and rows of cars and at times an ice cream van line the cricket pitch's northern boundary. The cricket field is distinctive in that an impressive oak tree stands inside the boundary. The Green remains the social and physical heart of the village.

A major characteristic of the village is that it does not have a church, pub or shop. Ickwell is part of Northill Parish and it is in the village of Northill that the church and village pub may be found.

## Appearance

### *Warden Road*

The road running north from Old Warden turns through 90 degrees towards The Green and this corner marks the beginning of the conservation area. To the north of Warden Road is the Historic Park and Garden of Ickwell Bury. A boundary within these grounds effectively divides pasture land to the south west from parkland with large forest-scale trees to the north east. There are also belts of mature trees along the road side. These are not so dense as to prevent views across the park to the house and associated buildings in the distance. A new footpath, created in the raised bank to avoid the blind corner, allows some particularly good views. Heading west towards The Green, the bank drops and becomes a grass verge. The timber boundary fence is rather low-key for such grand parkland.



*Ickwell Bury from Warden Road*



All the properties along Warden Road are along the south side and include a fine group of four thatched cottages with rendered timber framed walls. Nos.5 and 7 are gabled onto the road whilst nos.9 and 13 are parallel to the road. No.7 is C17 whilst the others are C18. No.9 has a simple picket fence characteristic of several traditional cottages in the village. No.13 has a weatherboarded gable at the west end and is single storey whilst the others have attic rooms. Most have been extended, no 5 with an L-shaped addition with weatherboarded walls and a pantiled roof.



*No.5 Warden Road*

The majority of the other buildings are C20, however, an exception to this is no.11 which sits very close to the east side of no.13 and is rendered with exposed timber framing and a shallow pitched slate roof and probably dates from the C19. Nos.8 and 9a are modern and whilst the latter is largely hidden behind a hedge, no.8 has an open frontage dominated by the vehicle turning area and formal brick walls.

The rest of Warden Road, before arriving at The Green, contains houses built in the C20. These are all substantial properties many of which have been significantly extended. With the exception of 'Clare House', which is a bungalow, all are one and a half or two storeys. Perhaps the most interesting is 'Whitethorn' which although C20 has a thatched roof. Otherwise the houses usually have concrete tiled roofs which are hipped, have prominent gables or dormers, and painted rendered walls. Although the eastern part of the road lacks the historic buildings and intimacy of its western leg, the grass verges, hedge lines and mature shrubs in the gardens do soften the impact of the large houses which have a more consistent building line further back in their plots than the earlier buildings.

Nearest The Green, the two cottages on either side, Old Warden Cottage on the north side and Corner Cottage on the south side are technically on Warden Road though of course they contribute much to The Green itself. Corner Cottage is a C17 thatched cottage of similar form to those found further



*Corner Cottage*

up Warden Road with a large C20 extension. Old Warden Cottage is of similar character to the group of cottages on the south west corner of The Green and is a one and a half storey timber framed cottage with a clay tiled roof with gabled dormers.

The cottage garden is well defined by hedges and the view across the garden to nos.12-14 The Green is a very attractive composition. However the main vista from the end of Warden Road is the remarkable panorama across The Green.

## *The Green*

Whilst The Green is read more or less as one space it is in fact a group of smaller greens. The cricket pitch occupies the larger, the maypole the second largest and the war memorial the third largest. The Green is dissected by the Old Warden – Northhill road which meets with Caldecote Road at a crossroads where the fourth arm is a track on the west side which leads to Ickwell Bury. A perimeter track gives access to the houses which border the space. The track is unmetalled and whilst it has a suitable rustic appearance, it is heavily pot-holed in places and could be enhanced.



*Ickwell Green as viewed from the cricket pavillion*

The north and west sides of The Green have a very strong character where there are no modern houses and the traditional cottages, houses and agricultural buildings are seen against a backcloth of parkland trees in Ickwell Bury Park. The other sides of The Green have seen more change by way of new houses and extensions. Despite this the vast scale of the space, the low-rise (no more than two storeys) scale of all the houses and judicious planting mean that there are very few discordant features in views across The Green.

Beginning at the north end, no.1 (Thackitt Eaves) is another C18 thatched timber-framed cottage of one and a half storeys. It has pointed-arched casement windows with leaded lights whilst the double porch shows that the cottage was originally a pair. The cottage sits behind a picket fence and the tree on the corner is important in helping enclose the north corner of The Green. No.3 is a contrast in that it is a simple cottage which from the front elevation appears single storey though



*No.3 The Green*

in fact it does have rooms in the tall clay tiled roof. As usual in the village it is timber framed and rendered though more unusually, it sits on a high plinth.

Nos.4 and 6 date from the C20 and are the only row of houses

in the old part of the village. However, the materials of construction and the picket fences around the garden mean that this block does not appear discordant when seen alongside its older neighbours.



Ickwell Grange (no.7), sits in the north-west corner of The Green and was the Home Farm. It is a grand formal and symmetrical house of red brick with a hipped tiled roof which appears to be C18 though may have earlier origins. The house separates itself from the triangle of grass in the corner of The Green by a hedge with some surviving lengths of cast-iron railing.



*Ickwell Grange*

A fine barn with weatherboarded walls and a hipped clay tiled roof sits next to Ickwell Grange, whilst up the track are a group of similar buildings which are important survivals of agricultural buildings in the village. These remain in agricultural use though their condition suggests that they together with the site in which they are located are worthy of enhancement.

South of Ickwell Grange is a belt of trees which together with the those in the park of Ickwell Bury give this part of The Green a very rural character. The entrance to Ickwell Bury is very modest with a simple wooden gateway and cattlegrid beyond. The trees here provide a very attractive backdrop to the vernacular former estate houses which stand along the narrow track on the west side of The Green. These cottages are timber framed encased in red brick and with clay tiled roofs with gabled dormers. Nos.8 and 9 (now a single house) has a small single storey timber framed wing which is reputedly the former village bakehouse.

Nos.10 and 11 are also now a single house and were probably remodelled in the C19, whilst no.12 is at right angles to the other cottages and dates from the late C19. Nos.13 and 14 are set much further back and originally had a direct access in front of no 2 Warden Road. These are again C17 remodelled in the C19 and have some diamond-paned casement windows. Nos.8, 9, 10, 11, 13 and 14 are all one and a half storey with gabled dormer windows which is a distinctive characteristic of Ickwell properties. Multiple dormers are found elsewhere on thatched and modern properties throughout the conservation area.

Beyond no.1 Warden Road and sat right in the south west corner of The Green are nos.15 and 16. Both cottages are thatched, one and half storey with a single hipped end and rendered timber frame. Whilst relatively similar in appearance, no.15 is significantly earlier in date. No.15 has been extended to the side whilst no.16 has been extended to the rear. Both extensions are substantial and further extension is likely to have an adverse impact upon the listed buildings and the appearance of the conservation area.

To the east is Colemoreham Farmhouse. This is a grand H-plan timber framed house covered with render (though the



*Entrance to Colemoreham Court*

and brick. Opposite is a modern cricket pavilion with nets and sightscreens to the side.

There are more modern houses and a bungalow on the south of The Green though no.20 is probably an extended C19 *cottage ornee* with curving bargeboards and diamond paned windows. Its quirkiness and lack of frontage garden makes it something of a landmark in the south east corner of The Green. Next to it is no.21 which is L-plan and has a tall gabled porch on the west elevation and a large extension to the east and sits behind a substantial hedge.

On the east side of no.21 is a bridleway across from which is Pemberley House and Springwood House. The latter is at right angles to the track behind a brick wall which formed part of the boundary of The Old House. Along the track is a substantial hedge and beyond open paddock land. Similar paddocks can be seen behind the houses on the south side of The Green.

The Old House dates from medieval times and was originally based on an open hall plan. It is timber framed and rendered, though various alterations have seen parts encased in brick. The house is one of the few buildings in the village still colourwashed in the traditional 'Ickwell Peach'. In the grounds, for which the landscape architect Gertrude Jekyll once produced designs, the former stables have been extended and are now a separate cottage, whilst another extended outbuilding can be seen gable end to the track towards the south of the plot. The garden includes the remains of the moat which surrounded the medieval house.

Nos.23, 24, 26 and 27 all have light coloured rendered gables facing The Green. All are relatively modern with the exception of no.27 which is a typical C17 thatched cottage. No.28 is modestly called Ickwell Cottage. It is however a substantial C18 two-storey house of red brick with a clay tiled

lower parts of the gables are encased in brick) and with a clay tiled roof. Again, the house sits behind a picket fence. The original farm buildings have been rebuilt and converted to houses. The main court is largely hidden behind a steeply gabled gateway set in the middle of a plain barn-style building of stained weatherboarding



*Tompion's Cottage and Village Hall*

roof and has a front hedge which arches over the front gate. On the corner of Caldecote Road is no.29 and the village hall. These have been formed from single storey outbuildings which were previously a wheelwright's



workshop. No.29 has triple roll pantiles and a bay window, whilst the lateral range of the village hall has a buttressed gable and taller return weatherboarded wing which forms a feature on the corner of Caldecote Road, with the gable of Tompion's Cottage behind.

On The Green itself is the former village smithy which is now used by the football club as a changing room. This is an unusual C19 building with rendered brick walls, a slate roof and with a door which has a horseshoe-shaped hood mould of brick.

On the opposite corner of Caldecote Road and largely hidden behind a substantial hedge and mature trees is no.30, Chestnut Cottage. This is an C18, one and a half storey cottage of rendered timber frame and gabled dormers in the clay tiled roof. To the north are two C20 houses. The Willows has a thatched roof though the brilliant white render and formal front walls and railings make the house unduly prominent in views across The Green. Lonsdale House has a tiled roof and sits behind a good hedge and a mature tree helps enclose the north east corner of The Green.

### *Northhill Road*

Adjacent to Lonsdale House is no.2, Yew Tree Cottage, which has a rendered timber frame with a thatched roof with three eyebrow dormers with tiled aprons. It sits behind an ironstone boundary wall. To its north is 'The Fishes', a modern house of one a half storeys which sits behind a picket fence. The width of the frontage and the lack of planting make the building prominent compared with the more traditional cottages in the village. Beside this is the telephone exchange. It is disappointing that a more traditional telephone box was not chosen for so sensitive a setting. Beyond are 'Thatchers' and 'The Ingle'. The latter is an attractive, early C20 house with applied timber framing to the gable and an ornate oriel window. Although surrounded by trees, it has an unusually open front garden which if repeated regularly throughout the area would significantly change the appearance of the area.

On the west side of the road is Thackit Eaves. This timber framed and thatched cottage is mostly C17 and has dormers with tiled aprons and unusual triangular headed windows to the ground floor. Beyond this cottage is a track to the agricultural buildings standing behind nos. 4 and 6. The rather utilitarian fence, parked vehicles and occasional building in need of repair detract from the quality of the main weatherboarded barns. Beyond this track, the conservation area also includes the Ickwell Bury parkland on the west side of the road which is important in providing a separation between the settlements of Ickwell and Northhill.

### *Caldecote Road*



*Tompion's Cottage*

On the south side, beyond the weatherboarded flank of the pre-school hall is Tompion's Cottage which has the date of 1500 on the prominent west gable and is of rendered timber framing and thatch.

The arched window with its diamond-paned casements and fine diagonally-set chimney stack are particular features. On the north side, the conservation area includes no.1 a one and a half storey cottage with rendered walls and a hipped tile roof with gabled dormers and a prominent chimney stack. The cottage is located behind a substantial hedge.

### *Ickwell Bury*

From the village, the main range of buildings sits on slightly raised ground across the parkland of occasional mature trees with one very old monkey puzzle tree particularly prominent. The red brick buildings with clay tiled roofs from some angles sit against a backcloth of denser tree planting which surrounds the lake.

The original house of Ickwell Bury dated back to the early C17 and was joined to the west of an L-shaped stable range built in 1680. The house burnt down in 1937 and was replaced by a smaller house in roughly the same position.



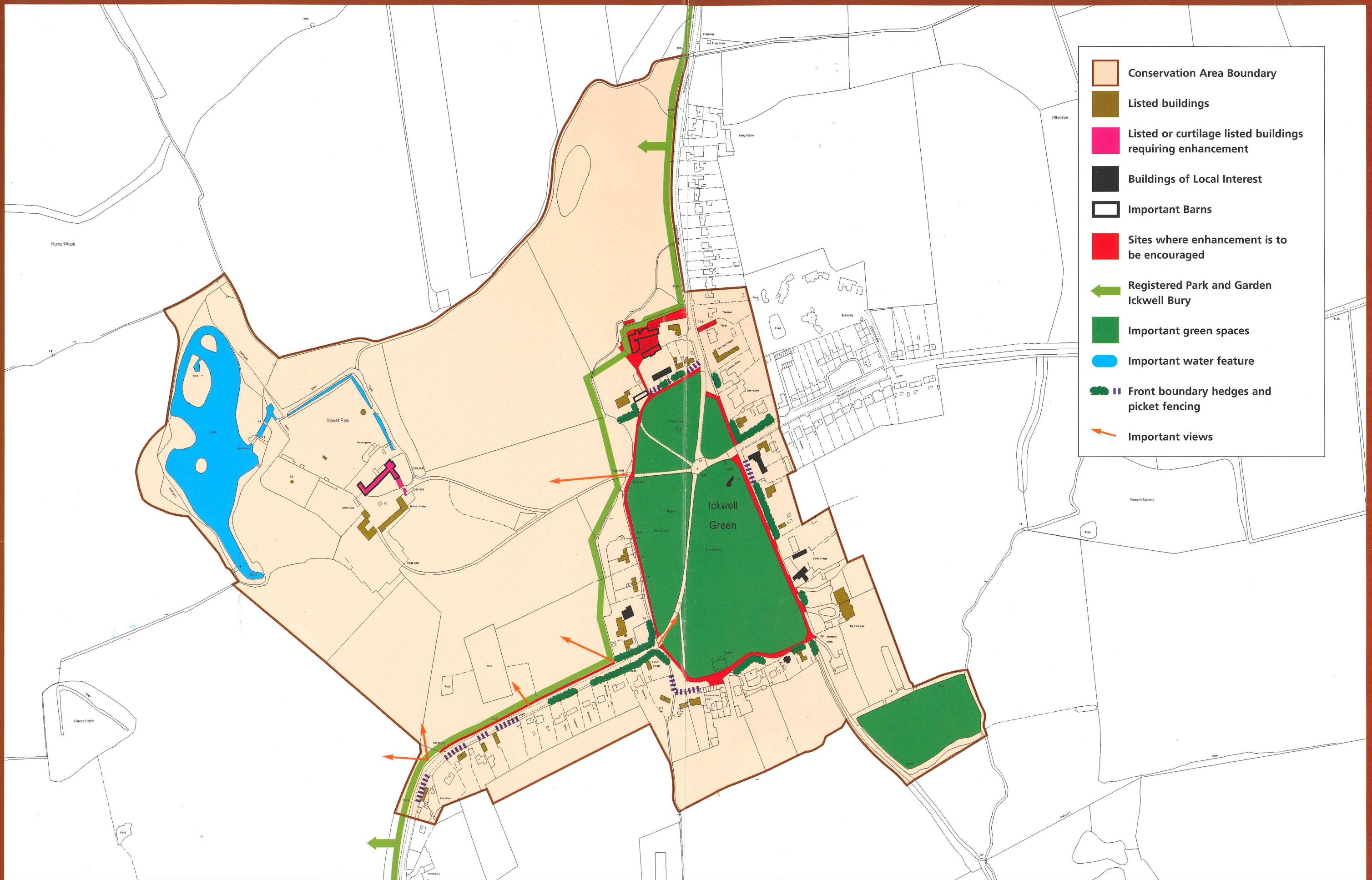
*Ickwell Bury (rebuilt in 1937)*

A bell turret with clock surmounts the converted stable block to the east of the Bury. The bell is inscribed "J.W. 1684" and thought to be by John Walton whilst the clock is dated 1683 and is thought to be the work of internationally renowned local clockmaker, Thomas Tompion. The entrance into the internal courtyard from the parkland has a C19 archway with a tower with a pyramidal roof which requires repair.

The courtyard is surrounded by further red brick and weatherboarded outbuildings dating from the C17 to C19. To the south of the main house is an enclosure with a low brick wall into which the southern leg of the driveway runs (the northern leg enters the courtyard through the archway). The majority of the formal gardens and parkland are not readily visible from the village as they are hidden by the house and outbuildings. To the north west of the house is a lawn and formal garden defined by tall red brick walls. These may have originally been kitchen gardens.

The axial 'Long Walk' runs through the north west of this brick wall into the planting and serpentine walks around the lake. The lake with its three islands has raised banks with mature trees and a culvert which runs into a ditch and then a small watercourse which runs north east to the Ickwell - Northhill road. This watercourse effectively separates the inner and outer parks and is an appropriate boundary for the conservation area.







## Enhancement

Generally, Ickwell Conservation Area is well maintained. The enhancement of the character and appearance of a conservation area can be defined as a reinforcement of the qualities providing the special interest which warranted designation. Firstly, it may be through the sympathetic development of sites identified in the detailed analysis of the area as opportunity or neutral sites. Secondly, it may involve positive physical proposals or thirdly, by the consistent application of positive, sensitive and detailed development control over extensions and alterations.

Areas which warrant special consideration are marked on the conservation area plan and are:

- Restoration of and repair to Ickwell Bury outbuildings, entrance arch, walls and Warden Road boundary.



*Outbuildings at Ickwell Bury*

- Repairs to Home Farm barns.
- Repairs to perimeter track.
- Replacement telephone box and enhancement of site behind.

## General Conservation Area Guidance

To maintain the distinctive character of Ickwell Conservation Area it will be necessary to:

1. Retain Listed Buildings and Buildings of Local Interest. There will be a strong presumption against the demolition of such buildings unless there is clear justification for doing so, for instance, being beyond repair. Where possible, other buildings which make a positive contribution to the conservation area should also be retained. If any of the above buildings become vacant efforts should be made to find a beneficial reuse.
2. Ensure that new development positively contributes to the setting of listed buildings the character and appearance of the conservation area in terms of siting, mass, scale, design and materials used. One and a half storey with dormer windows is the most predominant built form.
3. Ensure that house extensions and alterations satisfy the District Councils technical guidance entitled 'House Extensions and Alterations – a Design Guide for Householders'.
4. Seek to retain picket fences, hedgerows and ironstone walls where they positively contribute to the character and appearance of the area particularly in terms of frontage boundary treatments.
5. Where necessary retain trees within the conservation area and ensure that where new development is permitted, proper consideration is given to tree planting and appropriate landscape treatment.
6. Ensure the protection of locally important green spaces and the registered park and garden with a presumption against new development.

## PLANNING GUIDANCE – APPROVED FOR DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PURPOSES

This document was subject to public consultation between 19 February 2005 and 30 March 2005. Consultation included an advertised exhibition at Ickwell Village Hall and entry on the District Council's website. A full statement of the consultation process is available from the address below.

- This information can be provided in an alternative format or language on request **01767 602493**
- যদি অনুরোধ করেন তাহলে অন্য কোনও আকারে বা ভাষায় এই তথ্য আপনি পেতে পারেন। **01767 602493** (Bengali)
- 你可以要求以另一種格式或語言提供這些訊息 **01767 602493** (Chinese)
- ਧਿਵ ਨਾਨਕਵਾਰੀ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਣ 'ਤੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਨਾਂ ਬੋਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ। **01767 602493** (Punjabi)
- یہ معلومات آپ کے درخواست کرنے پر متبادل ڈیڑا ان زبان میں مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ **01767 602493** (Urdu)

### Mid Beds District Council

23 London Road, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire SG18 8ER

Tel: Planning Division: **01767 313137**

Conservation & Design Team: **01767 602405**

Email: [conservation@midbeds.gov.uk](mailto:conservation@midbeds.gov.uk)

[www.midbeds.gov.uk/services/planning](http://www.midbeds.gov.uk/services/planning)

*Planning Division*