



# **Wilstead Neighbourhood Plan 2020 - 2035**

## **Annex D**

### **Design Guide**

Draft Mar 2021

## **Draft Design Principles**

It is generally recognised that new development is necessary and that there are opportunities for small scale infill development to meet this need. Such Development must meet local needs and importantly must be appropriate to the scale and nature of the village, respecting its historic, agricultural and rural character.

### **The Pattern of Growth**

New development should respect the existing settlement pattern of the village in order to preserve its character. Development should contribute to and integrate with the Village Centre. The Village must continue to be a Rural Settlement surrounded by and integrated with working farms.

Suburbanisation and separate clusters must be avoided. Any proposal that would adversely affect the physical appearance of any part of the Village or give rise to an unacceptable increase in the amount of traffic, noise or disturbance would be inappropriate.

### **Design Guidance**

There are a number of design principles that should be present in any proposals. As general design guidelines, new development should:

- Respect the existing settlement pattern in order to preserve the character of the Village and the adjoining properties
- Integrate with existing paths, streets and circulation networks;
- Reinforce or enhance the established character of streets, greens and other spaces;
- Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;
- Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;
- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;
- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
- Integrate housing tenures;

- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;

## District Zones

The Village Design Statement in produced in 2000 identified District Zones with additional Design guidelines for each and these continue to be important and relevant. The Zones have now changed with the rationalisation of Parish Boundaries in 2011 and 2 new significant developments at Longmeadow Drive and Wooding Way. A plan showing the Zones is attached at Appendix 2.

Zone 1 Bedford Road north of the Village Centre.

At its northern end is a row of terraced pebble dashed interwar ex-council houses that are unique to the village. These are well set back from the road and have views eastwards across open countryside towards Shortstown. Duck End Lane comprises mainly 19th century farm buildings and Carey's cottages with some recent conversions and additions. Nearer the centre modern post-war development has all but removed old buildings with some still represented at Cawne Close, numbers 20 -22 and numbers 5 to 7. The old Red Lion. the mock Tudor Red Lion we see today was constructed in front of the old public house next to the former village green.

Small pockets of development of various types and characteristics have sprung up along Bedford Road with Cawne Close and Black Hat Close being the most recent examples.

Zone 2 The Village Centre

Originally a crossroads on the busy A6 Trunk road, the Centre has extended from All Saints Church eastwards along Cotton End Road to the junction with Whitworth Way and Castle Close. This area includes the Village Hall, the Village School, the Post Office the Village Car Park and Playing fields and the Methodist Church.

The Crossroads remain an important part of the Village heritage but is now a very jumbled and disconnected area in which earlier buildings have been swept away. A disharmonious row of shops and utilitarian stark commercial development and open storage for cars occupy three corners of the crossroads leaving the adjacent Woolpack as the sole representative of former times.

**Any development of the Crossroads must be of the most sensitive nature and part of a long term plan to restore the area to a focal point in keeping with the heritage of the Village**

The original character is still retained in Church Road which leads from the crossroads to All Saints Church. To the east of the Crossroad are some of the most distinctive older buildings of the village including the Manor House the post office the adjacent row of terraced cottages and the Old Elephant and Castle Public House, now a private dwelling.

### Zone 3 Cotton End Road (Western end)

This area has seen large changes since the 1950s with the Whitworth way Estate built on land to the south of cotton End Road together with Dines Close and more recently Castle Close (1970's) on the northern side. These developments which interrupted the ribbon development that predominated in the village include important green spaces and verges which has help to lessen the visual Impact of large development on the village.

## Zone 4 Cotton End Road (Eastern end)

Once past the Whitworth Way Estate travelling eastwards the housing revert to ribbon development along Cotton End Road and down the various lanes which branch off to eventually become footpaths bridleways into the surrounding countryside. The farm houses and buildings set back from the road are the oldest structures and add to the ambiance and the views. On the road, the most notable type of building is the early 20th century brick Villa with double bay windows and a central front door all covered by a tiled canopy roof above the ground floor windows.

Beyond Chapel Lane bungalows and an open pattern of house types predominate. The type of early 20<sup>th</sup> Century villa described above is frequently found here. Some traditional wooden barns survive near the road side.

## Zone 5 Luton Road

Luton Road extends from the Crossroads to the junction with the A6. There is again a mixture of early 20th century double fronted villas and post-war housing. There are a number of estates built off Luton Road. Initially a small 1960's Estate mainly on the west side leading to the Church and Vicarage and more modern developments at Howards Close and Long Meadow Drive. These new developments are of ??????. The Long Meadow Drive development includes a number of 3 storey houses located on the entrance to the Village from the South. These are disproportionate to the normal scale of housing in the Village and demonstrate why development to this scale should be avoided. Towards the end of the zone is the extensive Briar Bank Park Homes, a distinctive development of some 200 units for elderly residents. These single-story homes are attractively set out amongst mature trees and gardens the park inconspicuously extends from Luton Road towards the edge of Wilstead Woods and is enclosed on all sides by hedges and fields.

## Building materials

Within the village it is possible to see characteristic types and styles of building and construction materials associated with each zone and these should be respected in any development or alterations to buildings.

Zone 1, the northernmost part of Bedford Road has mostly buildings associated with thirties- and fifties-type ribbon development - brick exteriors, sometimes rendered, concrete roof-tiles (these were introduced during the inter-war period as being cheaper to produce than traditional clay tiles).

In the remainder of Bedford Road the pebble-dashed inter-war ex council houses have concrete tile roofs, **the only clay tiles are in Cawne Close**. The Woolpack and No. 20/22, both nineteenth century buildings, have slates. Bricks are still the main building materials.

The centre of Wilstead, Zone 2, has extremely varied building materials reflecting its mixed nature. Industrial and commercial buildings use modern materials such as felt roofs and precast pebble-dashed concrete wall sections which clash with traditional materials used in the very mixed, even picturesque Church Road.

This theme is continued at first in Cotton End Road, Zone 3, where the older buildings are built of a characteristic warm brick, which originate from a now worked-out local clay pit near Dane Lane.

Beyond Chapel Lane (in Zone 4) the bungalows and houses are of brick with a proportion of rendering or pebbledash being typical building materials. Concrete roof tiles, some replacing the original clay ones on older buildings are common.

Luton Road (Zone 5) shows essentially the same pattern of house-types and materials as Zone 4.

Briar Bank Park forms a distinct architectural environment within Wilstead which is, however, internally consistent. Its Park Homes are set on concrete bases and are skirted with brickwork so as to be flush with the ground. the wall material is plywood that can be washed or rendered in various colours to

present pleasing variations within a close-knit pattern. Roofs are constructed of composition tiles in a range of subdued colours.

## **Summary**

The main exterior building material used in Wilstead is exposed brick of varying appearance and colour. Rendering often provides a pleasing variation on naked brick. Roofing materials are pre-dominantly dark brown or grey in colour, consisting of clay or concrete tiles, or slates.

Windows throughout Wilstead are predominantly white and small paned (with some examples of sashes). There are a few examples of decorated windows with stained glass and leaded lights - these have been added since the 60s & 70s. The window surrounds are also predominantly simple and without obvious 'over decoration'

## **The following characteristics are typically found and should be reflected in new development:**

- Roofing types are almost universally pitched and consist of dark red/brown/grey tiles or slate
- The building material is predominately brick, of a warm colour (buff with a pink blush) rather than dark red, yellow or buff. Some houses are rendered or part-rendered
- Relatively small, simple windows and plain brickwork without elaborate or coloured courses or external details, are typical. To deviate from these would be out of character
- Buildings which exceed two storeys in height are disproportionate and out of character.
- Pre-cast concrete and corrugated materials (as found, for example, in the village centre) conflict with typical village styles
- Spaces between buildings are non-uniform and generous - this gives Wilstead its feeling of openness
- A characteristic of early 20th century double fronted villa is worth echoing as a model, where appropriate

New developments should respect the existing architectural style and types in each respective area. New proposals should aim to preserve the character of the area and enhance the sense of place wherever possible.

In general care should be taken that new constructions and extensions are in keeping with the appearance of neighbouring buildings.