

MARSTON MORETEYNE PARISH COUNCIL

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Central Bedfordshire Local Plan – Submitted Sites Consultation

Marston Moreteyne Parish Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Local Plan – Submitted Sites Consultation and recognises the importance of planning positively for the future of Central Bedfordshire.

The Parish Council acknowledges that growth will continue to play an important role in the future development of the area. However, the residents of Marston Moreteyne have already experienced significant strategic growth pressures as a result of existing and proposed development within the Marston Vale area.

Over the past 15 years, the parish has accommodated approximately 1,020 new dwellings. In addition, the proposed Marston Valley development, comprising up to 5,000 new homes, specialist residential accommodation, up to 30 hectares of employment land, and retail development on land between Brogborough, Lidlington and Marston Moreteyne, will have a substantial impact on the surrounding communities, including Marston Moreteyne.

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In light of this scale of development, the Parish Council strongly believes that no further site allocations for development within Marston Moreteyne should be considered until the Marston Valley development has been completed and the community has had sufficient time to integrate and adapt to the significant changes arising from that scheme.

The Parish Council has carefully considered each of the sites included within the consultation and sets out its comments below.

Site Details	Comments
Site 136283 Total Site Size: 0.24 ha Proposed Use: Residential	Objection Land assessments, including the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), which are used by local authorities across England, apply a standard baseline density of 30 dwellings per hectare. On this basis, approximately 0.33 hectares of land is required to accommodate 10 dwellings. The site in question measures only 0.24 hectares. The Parish Council is therefore concerned that this site has been included for consultation, as Central Bedfordshire Council's (CBC) own assessment criteria indicate that residential sites incapable of delivering at least 10 dwellings have already been discounted and are not intended to be taken forward for consultation. On the evidence available, this site does not appear to meet that minimum threshold. Furthermore, the site lies within the curtilage of a Grade II Listed Building. Any residential development would be unlikely to preserve or enhance the significance and setting of this designated heritage asset and would therefore be unsympathetic to its historic context. Development of the site would also constitute overdevelopment, eroding its informal and open character. It would introduce an incongruous urbanising form of development that is out of keeping with the established character of the surrounding area and would fail to preserve the setting of the Grade II Listed Building.
Site 136327 Total Site Size: 0.79ha Proposed Use: Residential	Objection Lower Shelton is identified as a small linear village, and the proposed site lies beyond the established built form and is in open countryside. As such, the proposal does not represent infill development and would be contrary to the settlement's established linear pattern of growth. Marston Moreteyne Parish Council's Green Infrastructure Plan identifies the retention of Lower Shelton's linear character as a key aspiration. Development of this site would undermine that objective by extending the settlement into the surrounding countryside in a manner that is inconsistent with its existing form and character. The proposal would also result in the permanent loss of agricultural land and open countryside. This would reduce land available for food production, lead to the loss and fragmentation of wildlife habitat, diminish biodiversity, and remove land that contributes to natural flood management. In addition, the development

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	would adversely affect the quality of the rural landscape and the green infrastructure that provides important environmental and visual benefits. Lower Shelton has very limited local facilities, comprising only two small play areas, with no shops, schools, healthcare facilities or other community services. Consequently, residents are heavily reliant on private vehicles to access everyday services and employment. Development at this location would therefore fail to promote sustainable patterns of growth and would be likely to increase traffic on the surrounding rural road network. For these reasons, the Parish Council considers that the site is unsuitable for allocation within the Local Plan. The proposal would represent an unjustified encroachment into the open countryside, conflict with the established character and form of Lower Shelton, fail to support the principles of sustainable development, and result in significant harm to the rural landscape, local green infrastructure, and the wider environmental character of the area.
Site 136396 Total Site Size: 9.1 ha Proposed Use: Residential	Objection Wood End is identified as a small rural hamlet located to the west of Marston Moreteyne. It is characterised by dispersed semi-rural residential development, agricultural businesses and a limited number of industrial and commercial units on its periphery. The proposed site lies within open countryside and does not constitute infill development. Development in this location would represent an unjustified extension of the settlement, eroding the existing settlement pattern and rural character of the hamlet. It would also have a harmful impact on the open views and landscape setting that define the character and identity of Wood End. The proposed development would result in the permanent loss of agricultural land and open countryside. This would reduce land available for food production, lead to the loss of wildlife habitat and biodiversity, diminish the site's role in natural flood management, and adversely affect the landscape quality and green spaces that contribute to the area's environmental value. Wood End contains no local services or community facilities. Residents must travel to the centre of Marston Moreteyne to access shops, schools, healthcare and other essential services, with journeys predominantly undertaken by private car. Consequently, the site represents an inherently unsustainable location for new development, being poorly related to the settlement hierarchy and offering limited opportunities to promote sustainable travel. Development of the site would also increase traffic on the surrounding rural road network, with associated impacts on highway capacity, safety and the amenity of existing residents. In addition, the proposal would place further pressure on local infrastructure, including drainage systems, water supply and utility services. The capacity of existing infrastructure to accommodate additional development would need to be clearly demonstrated before the site could be considered suitable for allocation.

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	For these reasons, the Parish Council considers that the site is unsuitable for allocation through the Local Plan. The proposal would constitute an inappropriate encroachment into the open countryside, would fail to support the principles of sustainable development, and would result in harm to the character of the rural landscape, the setting of Wood End, and the surrounding environment.
Site 136607 Total Site Size: 187.12 ha Proposed Use: Residential, Employment	Objection Both Upper and Lower Shelton are identified as small linear villages, and the proposed site lies beyond the established built form in open countryside. As such, the proposal does not represent infill development and would be contrary to the settlement's established linear pattern of growth. Marston Moreteyne Parish Council's Green Infrastructure Plan identifies the retention of both Upper Shelton and Lower Shelton's linear characters as a key aspiration. Development of this site would undermine that objective by extending the settlement into the surrounding countryside in a manner that is inconsistent with its existing form and character. The site lies within the curtilage of two Listed Buildings (Beancroft Farmhouse and Lower Roxhill Farmhouse). Any residential or employment development would be unlikely to preserve or enhance the significance and setting of these designated heritage assets and would therefore be unsympathetic to their historic context. Development of the site would also constitute overdevelopment, eroding their informal and open character. It would introduce an incongruous urbanising form of development that is out of keeping with the established character of the surrounding area and would fail to preserve the setting of the Listed Buildings. The proposal would also result in the permanent loss of agricultural land and open countryside. This would reduce land available for food production, lead to the loss and fragmentation of wildlife habitat, diminish biodiversity, and remove land that contributes to natural flood management. The site and its surroundings form part of the wider green infrastructure network, and development would reduce the area's capacity to absorb and manage surface water naturally. Introducing additional development in this location could increase pressure on existing drainage systems and exacerbate surface water management issues. The potential impact of additional hardstanding, increased runoff, and the loss of natural drainage capacity raise further concerns regarding the suitability of the site for development. The proposed access arrangements also present significant highway safety concerns. The access point is located on a blind double bend, where visibility is restricted and the ability for drivers to safely anticipate and respond to oncoming traffic is limited. This location is considered unsuitable for serving a large-scale development, as additional vehicle movements would increase the risk to existing road users, pedestrians, and

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	cyclists. The rural nature and geometry of the surrounding road network provide further constraints, and the intensification of use at this access point would represent an unacceptable highway impact. The proposal would also adversely affect the quality of the rural landscape and the green spaces that contribute to the environmental value and character of the area. The development would result in an urbanising influence on the countryside and would harm the setting and identity of both Upper and Lower Shelton as small rural settlements. Lower Shelton has very limited local facilities, comprising only two small play areas with no shops. Upper Shelton has one butchers shop only. Neither village has a school, healthcare facilities or other community services. Consequently, residents are heavily reliant on private vehicles to access everyday services and employment. Development at this location would therefore fail to promote sustainable patterns of growth and would be likely to increase traffic on the surrounding rural road network, including Upper and Lower Shelton Roads. The introduction of additional employment use at this location is also considered inappropriate. The proposed employment development would represent a further encroachment into open countryside, resulting in an urbanising form of development that would be out of keeping with the rural character and landscape setting of both Upper and Lower Shelton. The site is not located within an established employment area, and such a use would undermine the settlement's existing character by introducing increased commercial activity into a predominantly rural environment. Additional employment use would also generate a significant increase in vehicle movements, including staff, deliveries, and servicing traffic, placing further pressure on the already constrained local road network. This is of particular concern given the rural nature of both Upper and Lower Shelton Roads. The additional traffic generated by employment development would therefore have an unacceptable impact on highway safety, residential amenity, and the character of the surrounding countryside. For these reasons, the Parish Council considers that the site is unsuitable for allocation within the Local Plan. The proposal would represent an unjustified encroachment into the open countryside, conflict with the established character and form of both Upper and Lower Shelton, fail to support the principles of sustainable development, and result in significant harm to the rural landscape, local green infrastructure, highway safety, and the wider environmental character of the area.
Site 136608 Total Site Size: 202.86ha Proposed Use: Employment	Objection The Parish Council objects to the allocation of this site for further employment development. The site is located immediately adjacent to the Millennium Country Park, within open countryside and on the rural edge of both Marston Moreteyne and Stewartby villages. The proposed allocation would result in significant harm to the

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	character and appearance of the rural landscape, the integrity of the local green infrastructure network, and the established relationship between the village edges, surrounding countryside, and the Millennium Country Park. While the site already accommodates some established employment uses, any further expansion of employment development would result in a significant increase in vehicle movements, including employee commuting, deliveries, servicing, and associated commercial traffic. This additional traffic would place further pressure on an already constrained local highway network, particularly given the rural nature and limited capacity of the surrounding access roads. The resulting increase in traffic movements would have unacceptable impacts on highway safety, residential amenity, and the quiet rural character of the surrounding area. The scale and nature of additional employment development would be inconsistent with the existing settlement pattern and would represent an inappropriate expansion into open countryside. The proposed allocation would also undermine the character and setting of the Millennium Country Park and would fail to protect the local landscape and green infrastructure assets that contribute significantly to the environmental quality and identity of the area. For these reasons, the Parish Council considers that the site is unsuitable for allocation within the Local Plan. The proposal represents an unjustified encroachment into open countryside, conflicts with the established character of both Marston Moreteyne and Stewartby villages and its rural setting and fails to demonstrate that the development would constitute sustainable growth. Instead, it would result in significant and unacceptable harm to the rural landscape, local green infrastructure, highway safety, residential amenity, and the wider environmental character of the area.
Site 136627 Total Site Size: 11.91ha Proposed Use: Employment	Objection The Parish Council objects to the proposed allocation of this site for employment development. Although the site benefits from proximity to the A421, it remains located within open countryside on the rural edge of Marston Moreteyne. Its allocation for employment use would result in the unnecessary loss of undeveloped countryside, causing significant harm to the rural landscape, the setting of the village, and the integrity of the local green infrastructure network. The development would erode the open rural character and outlook that currently defines this part of the parish and contributes to its distinct identity. Employment development on the site would generate a substantial increase in vehicle movements, including employee travel, heavy goods vehicles, deliveries and servicing traffic. This additional demand would place further pressure on the existing A421 junction and its slip roads, which already experience capacity constraints. These junctions will also be required to accommodate traffic associated with the proposed Marston Valley development, including approximately 5,000 new homes together with associated employment development.

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	The cumulative impact of these developments has not been satisfactorily demonstrated to be acceptable and raises significant concerns regarding the capacity, efficiency and safety of the local highway network. The increase in traffic would have adverse effects on highway safety, residential amenity and the environmental quality of the surrounding area through increased congestion, noise and vehicle emissions. The scale and intensity of the proposed employment use would be out of keeping with the existing settlement pattern and would represent an inappropriate and unjustified expansion into the open countryside. Furthermore, the allocation would fail to safeguard the landscape and green infrastructure assets that make an important contribution to biodiversity, the rural setting of Marston Moreteyne and the wider environmental character of the area. The loss of these assets would be contrary to the objectives of achieving sustainable development by protecting and enhancing the natural environment. For these reasons, the Parish Council considers that the site is unsuitable for allocation within the Local Plan. The proposal constitutes an unjustified encroachment into the open countryside, would undermine the established character and rural setting of Marston Moreteyne, and has not demonstrated that it can be accommodated without unacceptable cumulative impacts on the highway network or the environment. Consequently, the allocation is not considered to represent sustainable development and should be omitted from the Local Plan.
Site 136699 Total Site Size: 8.29ha Proposed Use: Residential	Objection Lower Shelton is identified as a small linear village, and the proposed site lies beyond the established built form in open countryside. As such, the proposal does not represent infill development and would be contrary to the settlement's established linear pattern of growth. Marston Moreteyne Parish Council's Green Infrastructure Plan identifies the retention of Lower Shelton's linear character as a key aspiration. Development of this site would undermine that objective by extending the settlement into the surrounding countryside in a manner that is inconsistent with its existing form and character. The proposal would also result in the permanent loss of agricultural land and open countryside. This would reduce land available for food production, lead to the loss and fragmentation of wildlife habitat, diminish biodiversity, and remove land that contributes to natural flood management. The site and its surroundings form part of the wider green infrastructure network, and development would reduce the area's capacity to absorb and manage surface water naturally. There are also significant concerns regarding flood risk and drainage. Lower Shelton Road in the vicinity of the proposed site is known to experience regular flooding, which already creates disruption and safety concerns for residents and road users. Introducing additional development in this location could increase pressure on existing drainage systems and exacerbate surface water management issues. The potential impact of additional

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	hardstanding, increased runoff, and the loss of natural drainage capacity raise further concerns regarding the suitability of the site for development. The proposed access arrangements also present significant highway safety concerns. The access point is located on a blind double bend, where visibility is restricted and the ability for drivers to safely anticipate and respond to oncoming traffic is limited. This location is considered unsuitable for serving a large-scale development, as additional vehicle movements would increase the risk to existing road users, pedestrians, and cyclists. The rural nature and geometry of the surrounding road network provide further constraints, and the intensification of use at this access point would represent an unacceptable highway impact. The proposal would also adversely affect the quality of the rural landscape and the green spaces that contribute to the environmental value and character of the area. The development would result in an urbanising influence on the countryside and would harm the setting and identity of Lower Shelton as a small rural settlement. Lower Shelton has very limited local facilities, comprising only two small play areas, with no shops, schools, healthcare facilities or other community services. Consequently, residents are heavily reliant on private vehicles to access everyday services and employment. Development at this location would therefore fail to promote sustainable patterns of growth and would be likely to increase traffic on the surrounding rural road network, including Lower Shelton Road, which already experiences congestion and flooding-related constraints. For these reasons, the Parish Council considers that the site is unsuitable for allocation within the Local Plan. The proposal would represent an unjustified encroachment into the open countryside, conflict with the established character and form of Lower Shelton, fail to support the principles of sustainable development, and result in significant harm to the rural landscape, local green infrastructure, highway safety, and the wider environmental character of the area.
Site 136716 Total Site Size: 103.17ha Proposed Use: Employment	Objection The Parish Council objects to the allocation of this site for further employment development. The site is located immediately adjacent to the Millennium Country Park, within open countryside and on the rural edge of both Marston Moreteyne and Stewartby villages. The proposed allocation would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the rural landscape, the integrity of the local green infrastructure network, and the established relationship between the village edges, surrounding countryside, and the Millennium Country Park. While the site already accommodates some established employment uses, any further expansion of employment development would result in a significant increase in vehicle movements, including employee commuting, deliveries, servicing, and associated commercial traffic. This additional traffic would place further pressure on an already constrained local highway network, particularly given the rural nature and limited capacity of the surrounding access roads.

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	The resulting increase in traffic movements would have unacceptable impacts on highway safety, residential amenity, and the quiet rural character of the surrounding area. The scale and nature of additional employment development would be inconsistent with the existing settlement pattern and would represent an inappropriate expansion into open countryside. The proposed allocation would also undermine the character and setting of the Millennium Country Park and would fail to protect the local landscape and green infrastructure assets that contribute significantly to the environmental quality and identity of the area. For these reasons, the Parish Council considers that the site is unsuitable for allocation within the Local Plan. The proposal represents an unjustified encroachment into open countryside, conflicts with the established character of both Marston Moreteyne and Stewartby villages and its rural setting and fails to demonstrate that the development would constitute sustainable growth. Instead, it would result in significant and unacceptable harm to the rural landscape, local green infrastructure, highway safety, residential amenity, and the wider environmental character of the area.
Site 136842 Total Site Size: 31.08ha Proposed Use: Residential	Objection Lower Shelton is identified as a small linear village, and the proposed site lies beyond the established built form in open countryside. As such, the proposal does not represent infill development and would be contrary to the settlement's established linear pattern of growth. Marston Moreteyne Parish Council's Green Infrastructure Plan identifies the retention of Lower Shelton's linear character as a key aspiration. Development of this site would undermine that objective by extending the settlement into the surrounding countryside in a manner that is inconsistent with its existing form and character. The proposal would also result in the permanent loss of agricultural land and open countryside. This would reduce land available for food production, lead to the loss and fragmentation of wildlife habitat, diminish biodiversity, and remove land that contributes to natural flood management. The site and its surroundings form part of the wider green infrastructure network, and development would reduce the area's capacity to absorb and manage surface water naturally. There are also significant concerns regarding flood risk and drainage. Lower Shelton Road in the vicinity of the proposed site is known to experience regular flooding, which already creates disruption and safety concerns for residents and road users. Introducing additional development in this location could increase pressure on existing drainage systems and exacerbate surface water management issues. The potential impact of additional hardstanding, increased runoff, and the loss of natural drainage capacity raise further concerns regarding the suitability of the site for development.

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	The proposed access arrangements also present significant highway safety concerns. The access point is located on a blind double bend, where visibility is restricted and the ability for drivers to safely anticipate and respond to oncoming traffic is limited. This location is considered unsuitable for serving a large-scale development, as additional vehicle movements would increase the risk to existing road users, pedestrians, and cyclists. The rural nature and geometry of the surrounding road network provide further constraints, and the intensification of use at this access point would represent an unacceptable highway impact. The proposal would also adversely affect the quality of the rural landscape and the green spaces that contribute to the environmental value and character of the area. The development would result in an urbanising influence on the countryside and would harm the setting and identity of Lower Shelton as a small rural settlement. Lower Shelton has very limited local facilities, comprising only two small play areas, with no shops, schools, healthcare facilities or other community services. Consequently, residents are heavily reliant on private vehicles to access everyday services and employment. Development at this location would therefore fail to promote sustainable patterns of growth and would be likely to increase traffic on the surrounding rural road network, including Lower Shelton Road, which already experiences congestion and flooding-related constraints. For these reasons, the Parish Council considers that the site is unsuitable for allocation within the Local Plan. The proposal would represent an unjustified encroachment into the open countryside, conflict with the established character and form of Lower Shelton, fail to support the principles of sustainable development, and result in significant harm to the rural landscape, local green infrastructure, highway safety, and the wider environmental character of the area.
Site 136855 Total Site Size: 125.78ha Proposed Use: Employment, Green Energy	Objection The Parish Council objects to the allocation of this site for further employment development. The site is located immediately adjacent to the Millennium Country Park, within open countryside and on the rural edge of both Marston Moreteyne and Stewartby villages. The proposed allocation would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the rural landscape, the integrity of the local green infrastructure network, and the established relationship between the village edges, surrounding countryside, and the Millennium Country Park. While the site already accommodates some established employment uses, any further expansion of employment development would result in a significant increase in vehicle movements, including employee commuting, deliveries, servicing, and associated commercial traffic. This additional traffic would place further pressure on an already constrained local highway network, particularly given the rural nature and limited capacity of the surrounding access roads. The resulting increase in traffic movements would have unacceptable impacts on highway safety, residential amenity, and the quiet rural character of the surrounding area. The scale and nature of additional employment

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	development would be inconsistent with the existing settlement pattern and would represent an inappropriate expansion into open countryside. The proposed allocation would also undermine the character and setting of the Millennium Country Park and would fail to protect the local landscape and green infrastructure assets that contribute significantly to the environmental quality and identity of the area. For these reasons, the Parish Council considers that the site is unsuitable for allocation within the Local Plan. The proposal represents an unjustified encroachment into open countryside, conflicts with the established character of both Marston Moreteyne and Stewartby villages and its rural setting and fails to demonstrate that the development would constitute sustainable growth. Instead, it would result in significant and unacceptable harm to the rural landscape, local green infrastructure, highway safety, residential amenity, and the wider environmental character of the area.
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Yours faithfully

H. Trustam

Mrs H. Trustam
Parish Clerk